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EXTRACTS

FROM

A JOURNAL.

BY

W. I. MONSON, ESQ. M.A. F.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION.

Travel in the younger sort is a part of education, in the elder a part of experience.

Bacon's Essays.

DURING the years 1817, 1818, and 1819, the greater part of which I passed on the Continent, I was led frequently to note down those scenes and adventures which are so likely to impress a young traveller on his debüt in a foreign land.

My first inducement in keeping a journal was the amusement of a very near and interested relative; my second was of a more selfish character, that when years should pass on, and I should be far re-

moved from all I was then admiring, I might still preserve to myself a faint sketch of the esteemed original, and on opening my memorandum-book, might gaze again with the eyes, and feel with the enthusiasm of my youth. The very nature of my purpose rendered me an egotist, and what critics had I to fear? But when the kindness of my friends gives a larger circulation to my manuscript, I can neither claim the same advantages nor shelter myself under the same arguments; and fully aware of this, I endeavoured to revise what I had written in haste* and

* As a traveller without books, for any historical reference or quotation I could only refer to memory; but I trust I have since corrected any errors that must in consequence have arisen. Some of the notes, particularly in the first part, have been written after I extended my tour in Italy, and had greater opportunities of observation; but I have taken care not to embody any subsequent with the original remarks.

with unconcern; but I had yet to learn how very very heavily the pen moves when the feelings of the moment have gone by, the scenes that animated them far distant, and a bias only given by the coldly correct efforts of study. I have, therefore, again laid it down, and determining to abbreviate what I could not amend, I have selected only parts of my journal, and for this act of mercy I expect at least some gratitude. As my journal has throughout been, I am afraid, equally negligently written, my selection has been solely directed to what would be most interesting to my readers, to the countries less accessible and less liable to visit. Of France, Switzerland, and Italy, to say any thing new, seems, I own, impossible, and every thing old has been much better described before me; but there are other spots, and

particularly the Illyrian provinces, where travellers are still comparatively rare, and thither, with my readers' leave, I will now make them the companions of my travels.

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TOUR
IN
ISTRIA AND DALMATIA.
1817.



T O U R.

CHAPTER I.

VENICE TO TRIESTE.

Thus Venice fainter shines, and commerce thus
Of toil impatient, flags the drooping sail :
Bursting, besides, his ancient bounds, he took
A larger circle, found another seat.

Thomson's Liberty.

DURING our residence at Venice, having met some old college friends, we reciprocally agreed to make an excursion along the opposite coast of the Adriatic. One of the party was forced afterwards to form other plans ; but three of us still persisting in our resolution, hired a small bark, procured passports, and made other arrangements for the voyage. Tuesday, July 8th, was fixed for our departure, but a series of delays brought the day nearly to a close before

we left the lagunes, and then a heavy sea and adverse wind compelled us to seek shelter in a small creek about 20 miles from Venice. The spot was one of those so peculiar to the Venetian coast: a swampy plain extending for miles, without relieving the eye by an eminence or a tree, the very canals concealed by the luxuriant beds of rushes, with a noxious vapour hovering over the whole, and in the stillness of a cloudy evening. A few white cottages were the most interesting objects in this *verdant desert*; but after some difficulty in finding access to them through the bogs, we were denied reception, and compelled to bivouac amidst malaria and musquitoes. At three in the morning we roused our boatmen (who seemed more content with their birth) and put to sea. After frequent ineffectual struggles against the wind, we were forced to return and advance by inland canals, until towards evening we launched across the fine broad bay to Grado. The shore had hitherto been extremely flat, but now the mountains of Carinthia rose before us, overshadowing Trieste, and then branching away to the eastward. Grado formerly possessed some influence in Venetian politics, and its patriarch had often occasioned trouble to the

republic, until in 1456 it received a deathblow by the removal of the patriarchal government to the rival city ; since which, gradually declining, the present Grado has become a cluster of a few fishing huts, infested by disease and beggary. During the present year of scarcity, indeed, (1817), I have witnessed many scenes of extreme wretchedness among the paupers of Italy : I have seen them almost dispute our progress, and press on us when vermin and pestilence seemed to infect the air ; but* at Grado nature becomes blighted, the most disgusting objects forced themselves into our chambers, crawled after us in our walks, and disregarded alike either harsh or gentle words. At such a town, the accommodations were, of course, humble, but they provided us with a breakfast of fresh milk, eggs, and fruit, that deserved to be termed princely ; nay, the attention of these poor peasants went so far as to solicit some wine from the curate, who possesses the only tolerable residence in the place.

A few hours on the third day carried us

* At Grado it was no casual mortality, for the transference of the government to Venice, before alluded to, was partly owing to the unwholesome climate.

over the bay to Trieste. The first view of Trieste, as it spreads over the eastern shore, backed by an amphitheatre of mountains, reminded me forcibly of Genoa. Though built on the site of the ancient Sergestum, it is a very modern city, and possesses the usual advantages of modern cities, broad and regular streets. The houses are simply white, relieved by the green of Venetian blinds, and the quays most commodious for commerce. Commerce, indeed, is the genius of Trieste; for many years this was her only port in the Austrian dominions, and now she is allured from Venice by the advantages of a free harbour. The intercourse being chiefly with Oriental merchants, she renders quarantine as mild as possible. At one end of the town stands a noble lazaretto, with docks for ships, and an arcade separated down the centre by an iron grating, where the friends without and within may converse; and in another a long piazza has been arranged for a market, divided by low walls, which keep the purchaser and vender at respectful distances, and the goods and money are handed across on wooden shovels. Commerce even directs the arts at Trieste, for none of the buildings are handsome except the Exchange, the façade of which,

consisting of four Corinthian pillars, is both elegant and placed advantageously. The theatre ranks next with respect to exterior; but the cathedral is an old building, very little superior, except in gilding, to an English country church: we clambered up the tower, and were rewarded by a fine view over the town and busy harbour on one side, and on the other the commanding eminences which our guide described as being occupied by the English during their attack.

In the neighbourhood of Trieste is a cavern famous for its stalactites; and we hired a lumbering carriage to make an excursion thither, principally to obtain some information into the aspect of the country. The road passes over a succession of hills and high-lands, a barren surface covered with huge stones, interesting alone to the geologist. After an oppressive drive, the heat reflected from these rocks being dreadful, we at last discovered the cavern, where the peasants made a demand of five florins for showing it, the price, according to them, affixed by law. We asked for the *tariffe*, and they referred us to a cottage in the neighbourhood. Here they abated the demand by one-half, but would show us no *tariffe*, saying it was lodged at Trieste, and insisted on the

money being paid beforehand. Our choler was now roused in a *perfectly English* manner against imposition, and wishing them all at the devil, we determined to return to Trieste. Our coachman, to mitigate our bad humour, deviated from the road to a small well wooded park, where the Emperor of Austria keeps some Arabian horses, and which are permitted to range about at large, in number nearly 400, so said our coachman; but the provoking animals did not choose to appear, and we were left to judge of them by a few specimens in the stables.

In such a soil as we passed over, agriculture is of course at a stand: we met the peasantry chiefly employed in bringing down fir to the coast in small low carts drawn by oxen; these peasants or serfs are slaves to the soil, which it is death to quit, a relic, if I mistake not, of the feudal law. This system seems still to linger with partiality in Germany, while in other countries it has long ceased to exist, or if some few vestiges do exist, they are discovered by an indelible mark of that rudeness in which it was conceived, that arrogance by which it was fostered, and that inhumanity with which it was accompanied. We were in many respects amused with the change in the inhabitants to

whom a few days (I may add indeed a few hours, since Trieste is purely an Italian town) had introduced us; for the soft blue eye and light hair, long the German characteristics, we had left the dark tresses and glances unwittingly described by Burns.

For they are jet, jet black, and like the hawk,
And winna let a body be.

No longer we heard “the syllables which breathe of the sweet south,” but the “harsh northern whistling grunting guttural;” and instead of the abstemious cries of limonata and aqua fresca, that resounded in the piazza St. Marco, we were invited at a cabaret to taste a species of gin extracted from potatoes. A circumstance, however, which occurred to me at Trieste, proves that this predilection for spirits does not reach the town, more Italian, as I before said, than the country. To rid myself of the importunity of a beggar boy one evening as I stood near a caffè, I gave him a few soldi, and turned into the public room; to my great surprise he still followed me, not being, as I of course thought, satisfied, but no—he took his own little table, called for his ice with as much

importance, and was served with as much alacrity, as any of the company, and I found my small donation amply sufficient for the expense. Ice, in fact, owing to the oppressive heat of the climate, and from its remarkable cheapness, is reckoned among the necessaries rather than the luxuries of life, and is equally within the means as among the desires of all. Before I leave Trieste I must, from gratitude, mention what afforded me one evening's delightful recreation. It is the promenade in the neighbourhood of the town, not formed with the study of *boulevards* and *corsos*, but winding up in true rural simplicity the side of a lovely hill, its walks shaded with woods of oak, through which occasional vistas open on a narrow inland valley. What a relief for the Trieste merchant to stroll to such a spot after a day spent amidst the turmoils of the quays, and the dreary confinement of the counting-house: the noise of the port fades from the ear, the attention is gradually won to the apparent solitude of the spot, till a sudden opening from the brow displays the city and bay far below, illumined by a setting sun,—while he is gratified with surveying the scene of all his hopes and cares, for an

hour at least, it may be, with the tranquillity of unconcern ; he forgets its tumults and vexations, and may say, as with many events of life, that

“ Distance lends enchantment to the view.”

CHAPTER II.

ISTRIA—TRIESTE TO POLA.

Nunc passim vix reliquias, vix nomina servans
 Obruitur propriis non agnoscenda ruinis,
 Et querimur genus infelix humana labare
 Membra ævo, cum regna palam moriantur et urbes.

Sannazarius, lib. ii.

WE found at Trieste that our bark was too small to face the storms of an Adriatic sea; famous from antiquity for its horrors, (for what was there “improbo iracundior Adria?”) We therefore hired one of Parenza to prosecute our voyage. At 5 o’clock in the evening of July 14th, we left Trieste; numerous picturesque bays opened on our left, the sloping coast covered with almond trees, that grew to the very water’s edge, and contrasted well with the more stony mountains behind. It was quite dark when we entered the bay of Capo d’Istria; a few lights still twinkling pointed out the town seated on an island in its bosom, and gave us hopes at the same time that we should soon

rouse the officers of the health department, and obtain pratique. Vain idea! for nearly two hours were we remonstrating for permission to land; nothing availed until, by a bribe, we got a message conveyed to the governor, who sent down an instant command for that purpose. We were conducted to a small inn of remarkably neat accommodations, without the paltry finery of an Italian albergo; the rooms were simply white-washed: some prints of saints with Slavonic inscriptions, mattresses stuffed with vine leaves, a table and a few chairs, the only furniture. Eggs and milk and fruit were easily procured for our breakfast;—what more could travellers wish?

If ever a situation was lovely, it is that of Capo d'Istria. On a small island embosomed in the bay, its towers rise amidst an amphitheatre of hills, which man scarcely cultivates, but which the climate clothes in vines and fig trees and olives; the blue waters wash around its walls, except where a narrow mole joins the town to the continent: and at the extremity of this an old ruined castle, which formerly guarded the approach,

“ Still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly from the hill.”

In the interior, Capo d'Istria is but a melancholy capital; its streets are narrow and solitary, grass is growing between the pavement; the large square, built partly in the Greek, partly in the Saracenic style, appears wild and deserted; the cathedral is entirely without ornament; and the battlements remain at present merely an object of the picturesque. In fact, Capo d'Istria, if it ever were of consequence, has sunk under the French, has been destroyed under the Austrian dynasty; the days have been when Istria shared the glories, she now partakes in the decline of the Venetian republic. Having first become subject to her in 991, under Pierre Orseoli the second, by a treacherous policy; she frequently rebelled against her conqueress; but in later times she became almost nationalized as a province, her forests supplied Venice with her victorious fleets, and her coasts were the rendezvous of her navy. At present, though monuments abound every where to commemorate the coming of the Austrian Augustus, the winged lion, which though mutilated and defaced, appears in every square and over every gateway on the coast, meets with far more genuine homage.

The wind had risen considerably when we

left Capo d'Istria, and forced us to put into Pirano, a fishing town, seated at the foot of a cliff on the southern cape of the bay, with a small pier, affording a good harbour for our light bark. The ruins of a once noble chateau stretch across the heights above the town, and the lines of its fortifications are to be traced to the very borders of the sea; the promontory, with the exception of the little ledge on which Pirano seems to edge itself, descends in precipices to the waves; and, to resist their fury, immense buttresses have been erected, the work, according to the inhabitants, of forty years. On the extremity of the promontory, far elevated above the town, stands the church; and near this spot we met with an adventure which might have accorded with the romance of Mrs. Radcliffe's mind or the sentiment of Sterne's.

We had returned late from a ramble in the country, and desiring to view the interior of the church, which we had not yet seen, we procured a little boy to open it for us. A single lamp merely was glimmering before the altar of the Virgin, by which the long aisles, the painted ceiling, and dark Istrian marble could scarcely be visible. Determining to visit it at a more favourable hour, we turned out of the

porch, when a small square building, situated on the extreme point of the promontory, on the brink, as it were, of destruction, excited our curiosity. We were only separated from it by a low wall, which we easily leapt. The former destiny of the building is doubtful, but its site induces the supposition of its having been used as a beacon for the fishing barks, or a watch-tower against the numerous pirates of these seas. Its present dangerous and dilapidated state made us conceive it to be now deserted; but as the wind whistled round the bleak edifice, (for it was more like an English autumnal than an Italian summer evening) we heard a door banging to and fro on the opposite side. We found it had been purposely prevented from closing by a sack placed in the threshold; and within we descried a mattress and two chairs, the sole furniture of this dismal chamber; there was no window save a narrow grating in the upper part of the door, to admit light and air: never have I seen a spot more eccentric for its wretchedness and melancholy seclusion, combining at the same time a wild and vast sea view. Wondering who could be the unfortunate tenant, we inquired of the first passing peasant, who said it was the asylum of a young

girl not twenty years of age, remarkable for her beauty, but deprived of reason; we could not discover the cause of her calamity, but he did not allow it to be love. An aged mother resided with her for her protection, and it was their custom at the close of day, when least liable to meet observation, to wander forth in search of herbs, their only sustenance. A few more years and Heaven knows where they can seek shelter, for the cliff is daily crumbling from before their threshold. We paid them a visit on the morrow, but all our entreaties could not prevail on them to open the door, and we were forced to pass our donation through the grating.

In our rambles about Pirano we became acquainted with the country, which consists of a succession of hills, where olives and vineyards grow spontaneously—little narrow paths were cut among the orchards, sometimes rising over cliffs, at others leading along the bays. The verdant turf grows to within a few feet of the water, a beauty confined to seas where the almost total absence of tide leaves little interval of beach*: cottages spread upon the mar-

* To view the original of this picture, let the traveller proceed a little distance beyond the convent of St. Bernardino.

gin, adorned in front with an arcade of vines, and a lawn sloping to the water. The Istrian peasants are worthy of this paradise: they are in general remarkably civil, neat and cleanly in attire; much fairer than the Italians, and their children particularly pretty; they seem flattered on being addressed, and acknowledge any present by kissing their hands.

Hanging over a very remote recess of the bay upon a narrow ledge of rock, we discovered in our walks the convent of St. Bernardino: in front rises a lofty cross, and the convent consists of one quadrangle and a chapel. We took refuge within the cloisters, while a violent storm was passing over us; the windows and doors were swinging to and fro; the few chambers remaining tenantable have become the resort of some poor old women, who guided us by a private way down a dark staircase into the chapel. The chapel alone will give the traveller some idea of the splendour of the convent previous to the devastating invasion of the French; the chief altar lies indeed a heap of ruins, but many superb columns of native marble, and pictures of some merit, and still in good preservation, are sufficient to indicate that the time has been when the convent of

St. Bernardino boasted a wealthy as well as ancient name. Over the principal door the following inscription proves that it owes this wealth to the now little fishing village of Pirano.

HANC SACRAM AEDEM ET DOMUM RELIGIOSAM CIVES
PYRRHANENSES PISSIMI SANCTO BERNARDINO
ET FRATRIBUS MINORIBUS DEDICARUNT.
MCCCCLII.

On July 17 we sailed from Pirano, after a detention of two days, which we had passed much to our amusement. The coast of Istria assumes a very different appearance after Pirano. The hills, lower and much more barren, extend into uncultivated moors, or are shaded by copses of brushwood: cottages are no longer scattered along the coast, but a few fishing huts, here and there collected, are dignified by the name of a town: the marble quarries near Orsera give, for a short distance, a boldness to the coast. The wind which had been favourable through the day now changed, and we found it impossible to proceed further than a ruined village called Fasana, seven miles from Pola. We landed to seek for lodgings, and knocked at a large square building at the

extremity of the village. A man most cautiously first put his head out of window, and then on satisfying his prudence drew up a small bolt which communicated through the ceiling with the door. These precautions, particularly after what we had heard of the robberies of the Istrian coasts, were by no means inviting, but when we entered the rooms nothing could tempt us to remain ; vermin absolutely were creeping in every quarter, and large bunches of garlick, hung up, as they said, to counteract the bad air, caused an insupportable smell. Making a purchase therefore of some eggs and some fish, we returned to the vessel, made an excellent supper by moonlight on deck, and wrapping ourselves in our great coats, slept so soundly that we only awoke when the bustle of the mariners announced to us we were in the bay of Pola.

Pola had excited in our minds from its name no small respect. Under every change of time and power, this name had remained as sacredly uncorrupted as that of her imperial mistress ; though even in its most glorious days an inferior place in the Roman empire, though exposed to inroads from the Genoese and Ottoman arms, though bartered and conquered by nation from

nation, though without the fostering arm of power or taste, to preserve its mouldering remains, still throughout the north of Italy Pola will find no equal* in the magnificence of antiquity. Pillars and stones are strewn upon the beach, the narrow streets are paved with curious inscriptions, and wherever the eye rests, it sees colonnades and façades noble in decay. Let us enter by the Porta Aurea. This noble entrance was built by the affluence of an individual, and intended as a funereal arch. Four fluted columns support an entablature of basso-relievo, representing chariots and warriors; in the centre is the inscription:

SALVIA POSTUMA SERGII DE SUA PECUNIA.

Just below on each side the arch is a figure of Fame carrying a garland; the ceiling of the arch is richly carved in stone representing grapes and vine-leaves entwined, and in the centre an eagle carrying a serpent. What a splendid monument for an individual!!

“Laudis titulique cupido

“Hæsuri tumulis cinerum custodibus†.”—*Juvenal*.

* When I visited Istria I had not passed south of Florence; I had not yet seen Rome, Pompeii, and Agrigentum!

† Who, that has seen the mausoleums of Augustus and

In the centre of the town stand the temple of Augustus and the temple of Diana. The former long defied the ravages of time; but when the Genoese in 1380 became masters of the Adriatic, they wantonly burnt in the roof. The remainder however, though showing some signs of outrage, still remains entire. The façade consists of six Corinthian pillars, with the following inscription above :

ROMAE: ET: AUGUSTO: CAESARI: INVI: F: PAT:
PATRIAE:

The temple of Diana has nothing but tradition to point out its former destination: in the small square adjoining is an inscription which the natives say was taken from this temple:

Q: SERTIUS: CALLISTIUS: VIVIR: AUG: V: T: PRISCÆ:
CONJUGI: OPTUMAE: LIBERTIS: LIBERTABUS:
Q: SUIS: OMNIBUS:

Another near it seems to have been a monument.

T: HOSTILIO: T: H: CALLISTO: ANN: XXVII: HOSTILIA:
CALLISTE: SOROR: V: E:

Adrian, nay, the sepulchres of such unknown characters as Cestius and Metella, will doubt the justice of the satirist?

The front of the temple presents two Corinthian pilasters and a rich cornice ; it forms at present the side of an old house.

There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed.

The amphitheatre of Pola has been and is the glory of Istria and admiration of the world. Built by Titus after the destruction of Jerusalem, its form and architecture remain entire, when eighteen centuries have rolled by. Its shape is elliptical, and it consists of three stories, the two lower with arched windows, the upper square*. At the two extremities of the amphitheatre are the grand entrances, consisting of arches rather broader than the rest. At the sides are four entrances for the spectators, each consisting of two arches, thus the entrances in the whole form ten arches ; between the great entrances and the side are nine, between the sides thirteen, which with the above ten form seventy two. The arena in the centre is particularly large, and some appearance remains of its having been formerly di-

* The length is 366 Venetian feet, breadth 292 feet, height 74 feet two inches, the distance between the pillars 10 feet odd inches, and in the entrances 14 feet 10 inches.

vided. We could only trace one division in the seats, forming a distinction between the upper and the lower, but this passage still is very visible, running parallel with the exterior wall. Into this passage divers cross passages lead between the seats from the entrances, first descending by a sloping pavement, and then ending in eight steps with an arch thrown over them; one of these remains nearly perfect, and is in breadth six English feet seven inches: the larger passage is ten English feet one inch broad. The architecture is nobly simple, but massive. Pilasters of the Tuscan order decorate the intervals between the arches on the exterior, and in the interior the middles of the capitals being smooth betray where the arches of the corridors branched off. The whole of the exterior wall is intire, but on the eastern side the earth conceals as high as the second story. No inscriptions are now to be found on the spot; whatever the ravages of time and invasion had spared, the Emperor of Austria has lately removed. An hundred yards nearer the town are the remains of a portico, which once, according to tradition, crossed the road that led to the amphitheatre: it now makes part of the wall of an old fort, is closed up in the centre,

and all but a small portion of the beautiful cornice carried away by an English admiral.

Besides these Roman antiquities, Pola possesses some noble remains of the middle centuries. The fort which was built by the Venetians exists in excellent repair, well situated at the head of the bay and overlooking the town. Near it are the ruins of the convent of St. Francesco. Its chapel, though laid open by the fury of the French invasion to the inclemency of the seasons, is still

“ Like veteran, worn but unsubdued.”

Scott's Marmion.

Nay, the great entrance and circular window above, with all the oriental richness of the Saracenic style, not a little resembled the gothic edifices of our own country, to the decay of which this line applies. In their cathedral and in many of the houses of the town there exist pillars and cornices of the same style. The fronts often contain curious inscriptions of the sixteenth century: indeed I have seen one placed as the stone of the porchway. In the centre of the amphitheatre the inhabitants show a narrow dark descent, which they declare once

communicated under the sea with a small fort on the opposite side of the bay: fortunately for those who wish to believe it, the truth cannot be put to the test, as the passage is no longer practicable. The last works of man bestowed on Pola are the small forts constructed by the French* in the late war, and which, commanding every side of the bay, render it inaccessible to an enemy. Never indeed was there a more admirable port than that of Pola; it is entirely sheltered from the wind, and is so deep that ships of tolerable burthen may anchor close to shore. When therefore the ancient gallies could enjoy these advantages, and yet from relying chiefly on their oars be independent of the wind in getting out of harbour, is it to be wondered that Pola was a favourite colony of Rome? On the gifts indeed of her imperial mistress must all her reputation rest; she exists at present but a wretched collection of hovels built with the fragments of antiquity, her population does not exceed five hundred souls, and we experienced the greatest difficulty in finding a place which could pro-

* Under Marmont.

vide us with beds. Forbidding also is the aspect of the country; large tracts of heath, covered with huge stones, are hardly rendered more pleasing to the eye by a few scanty patches of Indian corn, or even by the low copses of myrtle and some straggling olives, which the luxuriant climate have produced. The people are wild in their appearance and dress; they wear small red caps on their heads, from which the hair escapes in two long braids on each side of the head; the women delight in a profusion of finery and ornaments. Rude, however, as was the exterior of the natives, their manners are simple and mild, and fraught with great anxiety to please. Most astonishing do I conceive it, after the great fund of instruction and amusement that Pola affords, that it should both be so little visited or known by travellers*, and so neglected by literary research. Neither at Venice nor at

* If we remain ignorant of the manners of Istria and Dalmatia, the natives also are equally unaware of what passes beyond their own native shores: many are transferred from one sovereignty to another, without being conscious of the cause of these revolutions. Madame de Staël is perfectly right when she says the English are the people they are best acquainted with. Our naval exploits prevent our being forgotten.

Trieste could we procure any work which treated of the coast of Istria; and the inconvenience which we experienced from being destitute of information, has induced me to be rather more diffuse in my remarks.

CHAPTER III.

DALMATIA—POLA TO ZARA AND SEBENICO.

Je me plainrais a voir tous les pays où il y a dans les mœurs, dans les costumes, dans le langage quelque chose d'original. Le monde civilisé est bien monotone, et l'on en connaît tout en peu de temps.—*Madame de Staël.*

WE found our mariners at Pola true Italians : they wished to persuade us at first the wind was not favourable, and then they conjured up a thousand horrors of a dangerous sea and hidden rocks, &c. We however insisted on setting sail, and about six on a fine afternoon (July 20), took our leave of the bay of Pola. Of all situations, that from the bay is without doubt the finest for viewing the amphitheatre : it stands at the head of the port, nobly single, none of its proportions lost or concealed among buildings ; a few shrubs and trees here and there shadow the outline : the elevation on which it stands slopes gently to the sea ; in fact, with-

out considering it as a building, its site is the loveliest imaginable.

We came to anchor that night in a small creek, distant seven miles from Pola, and found ourselves now completely reconciled to our bivouacking system. The next morning we started at four o'clock with a delightful breeze, which carried us to Zara, one hundred and sixty French miles, in fourteen hours. The sail afforded us a variety of novel prospects: we were embosomed amidst numerous isles consisting of barren hills, with scarcely any traces of being inhabited. At the end of the island of Orsera the lofty mountains of Croatia burst on our view, their rocky masses not even concealed by the pines or other trees which clothe the Alps. At six o'clock we came to anchor under the walls of Zara. We were detained a long time at the gates by a douanier, who could neither read nor write; and when at last we were conducted to the inn, it looked so filthy, that we did not like to abide there. We then ransacked the whole town to see if we could procure private lodgings, and were shown to such habitations, that an Englishman with his notions of comfort could hardly believe to exist. We seated ourselves at last in

despair in a *café*, when the owner of the inn returned and begged us to look at some other rooms, which by comparison appeared tolerable. In the mean while the gates of the town had been shut, and we should not have obtained our baggage if the master of the house had not, as captain of the band, exerted his interest with the guard to get them opened.

Zara was the ancient Jadera of the Romans, a colony of some celebrity, but of which at the present day few vestiges remain. Two columns of the Corinthian order are all the relics I could find; they are stationed at different parts of the town, (one near a large church), but there are no traces of what they were a part. The city itself, though once the capital of Liburnia and at present that of Dalmatia, is gloomy, confined, and with no striking buildings: its ramparts are the only spot where the inhabitants can obtain the least air. They extend round the town, and possess fine views. As for the interior, I do not wonder at the precautions that are taken to keep out the plague, since if it once gains admission, its effects in such a town must be dreadful. The famous *marasquin* is the great manufacture of Zara, and in fact the town itself smells of nothing else. The

dress of the Dalmatians is remarkably rich and picturesque; that of the men consists of a coarse shirt large in the sleeves, the extremities of which are embroidered in various colours; over this a red jacket without sleeves, laced and ornamented with round silver buttons, and a profusion of coins which hang on all sides; a pair of blue pantaloons, short stockings of the richest embroidery, and shoes that turn up in a peak at the end, and laced over with osiers. The hair is plaited into a long tail, and luxuriant mustachios hang over the upper lip. The Dalmatian women are equally addicted to a variety of gaudy colours; their hair, plaited over the head, is interspersed with little trinkets, resembling Spanish buttons, and their persons actually covered with ornaments. Both sexes wear shallow red caps on their heads.

From the higher classes of Zara we met with every civility. As it was our wish to go from Zara to Sebenico by land, in order more nearly to see the manners of the natives, we applied for that purpose to the governor and to the police. The attention, with which they received our request, deserves our thanks; they supplied us with horses, gave us an order for guards, without whom it is impossible in this dangerous

country to travel, and from their thorough knowledge of Dalmatia, assisted our plans with some most useful information. The governor showed us some intaglios and a collection of Roman coins that had been found at Scardona. We found many others in the town, but in execrable preservation, and which the owners prized much more than they were worth. The governor also gave us a billet of admission into a literary society, where we might read the newspapers; in fact he did every thing to make our stay agreeable. The system of society at Zara, like that in Italy, seems to be to meet in *caffés*: they possess a small theatre of *marionettes*, which were really most curiously well managed, particularly in a little ballet which was acted. July 24 was fixed upon for our pilgrimage from Zara over land. One of our party, Mr. H—w—ll, did not find himself in sufficient health for the undertaking, and determined to go with one of his servants by sea to Sebenico.

At break of day, our party, consisting of Mr. C—rt—s, myself, and a servant, were roused by the two *panduri*; such is the title by which they call these guards, and which sig-

nifies in Sclavonic, “Taker of robbers.” These people are faithful, courageous, and sagacious; their arms are a musket, pistol, and sabre, all of Turkish manufacture, and richly embossed. I cannot however say much for our horses, and as for their furniture, their saddles were made of wood like two hurdles fastened together, and thrown over the horse; in fact, the bare back was far more comfortable.

The towers of Zara rose conspicuous for many miles over the country which we traversed. It was an immense plain, partly covered with stones, partly hid by low brushwood, with every now and then an abortive attempt at cultivation. Not a house or a handsome tree was to be seen, and the slopes in the soil were too gentle to break the solitary extent of view. Sometimes we met a few masculine women driving goats, and at the same time spinning with their distaff or embroidering garments; at others a body of male peasants escorting, most strongly armed, some carts of hay. All the men, whether at the plough, or in their own cottage, still continue armed with pistols, &c. The country is so barren, that the mountaineers are forced to live by hunting or by robbery; and this costume is

not for display but for necessary preservation. In fact the description of Virgil still exists in these wilds of Dalmatia—

Armati terram exercent, semperque recentes
Convectare juvat prædas, et vivere raptō.

Æneid. Lib. vii.

Benco, the place where we were to change horses, consists of an old tower and about ten houses, situated on a hill as in the centre of a desert, even beyond the view of the Croatian mountains, and for many a weary hour before we arrived was visible across the open plain. How much has been said of the solitude of mountains, of sequestered woods and glens! yet I would appeal to any one who has been situated in a scene like the present,—a vast flat uninhabited country, if a far greater sense of loneliness has not pressed upon his spirits. In the varieties and wildness of nature, Edwin and Childe Harold would say,

“ There is society where none intrudes.”

But when the eye roves over a desolate plain, and the vision meets no change or check until it rests on a straight monotonous horizon, then indeed he is *alone*. We obtained at Benco some black bread and bad wine, the whole that

we had through this eventful day. After being delayed for two hours for horses, we again proceeded on our march. Our Panduri, as we now advanced into the more inland and dangerous parts, were increased to three. The people of Benco had endeavoured to dissuade us from proceeding by telling us a most horrid story of an attack three days before, but we were too eager to be dissuaded. We were well armed, and, if the Panduri remained firm, could have stood a large body.

The country as we advanced became more hilly, but equally barren : eminences at different distances were crowned by little towers, formerly built by the Turks, but at present inhabited by these robber-takers. We had been detained at different times so late, that night was now beginning to set in—a night which I think to the last hour of my existence I shall never forget. There is a description in Scott's last novel of the Black Dwarf of a scene which was the exact counterpart of the one before us—and Dalmatia perhaps of the two is the most romantic spot. Huge fragments of rock and stone interrupted our road, and the moon, which we had reckoned on as being at her full, was obscured by a gathering storm. To all

this the savage dress and dialect of our Panduri were a great addition. For some time we were even amused by the novelty of the scene ; but hour after hour passed, and we saw no signs of habitation. The guards spoke no other language but Illyric, and could not (or, as we then thought, would not) understand our inquiries after Ostrovitza or Scardona. For the first time the idea occurred that they might intend to betray us : nothing however was left for us but to follow. About ten o'clock we arrived at a spot where the road parted: they here halted, and made a sign that one of them led to Ostrovitza, the other to Scardona. The former was *one*, the latter eleven miles distant. Fatigued as we were by the uncomfortable saddles, and nearly dropping with thirst, we preferred the former. From the top of an eminence a flash of lightning discovered to us in a hollow a few straggling houses, which the guards pointed at as Ostrovitza. As we approached we found most of them heaped in ruins, and no appearance of being inhabited. Here they made us halt while they went forward to inform their brother Panduri, who might otherwise have shot us. After ten minutes parley they hallooed to us to advance, and we found seven or eight

people assembled, holding large torches of pine, by the glare of which they appeared more like demons than men. I seated myself on a stone at the door, for I was just fainting from excessive thirst, and, notwithstanding all our entreaties, they seemed so amused with staring at us, that we could scarcely get them to procure us some drink. At last they brought us some wine, which nothing but the most urgent necessity could have made us swallow. One of the natives then showed us to a hovel, where after mounting a ladder and traversing one room, the extent of which we could not see from its being enveloped in smoke, they passed into another within covered with cobwebs, with a bedstead in one corner and an old chest in another. We had hitherto been lighted by branches of pine wood, but on urgent solicitation they procured a lamp: they brought us also a bench, some putrid water, and a pitcher of their poisonous wine, then pointed to the bolt, and left us for the night. The square window of the room was unprotected by glass or shutter, and the storm which now broke over us drove in most unmercifully. Our servant lay down before the door to prevent any sudden intrusion; but in such a place and under such circum-

stances little sleep could we enjoy. Happy were we to see the morning break, and hear our Panduri come to call us.

The valley of Ostrovitza, which we were now able to see, is much celebrated among geologists for its extraordinary productions; but it possesses far from any other attractions to the traveller. We rejoiced however at having halted during the night, since we were now forced to leave the beaten track and pass across some uneven country, which might have been dangerous in the night. About four miles before Scardona we entered a valley of vines and gardens, to us appearing a Paradise, from the contrast of the stony hills. The road gradually winds along the valley, bordered by pomegranates, to the sea.

Scardona was once a town of great renown among the Romans, as it was here they assembled the States of Liburnia; but no traces of antiquity are now to be found. On the top of the hill are the remains of an old fort of a later age. The town consists of one long street, and its accommodations at the inn were so bad, that we rode to a *café*, and begged them to give us a room in which we might wash and eat our breakfast. They most civilly and immediately

introduced us to theirs, but all our endeavours could not procure one for the night.

After getting some new milk and fruit, we hired a boat and proceeded to the famous cascade of the Kerka, which hurries along a rocky channel from the city of Knin, and falls in near Scardona. The bay of Scardona is completely, as the natives most properly call it, a lake : its outlet is so narrow and turns so abrupt among mountains, as not to be perceptible to the eye on first view. The hills shelve to the edge, either formed of immense masses of rock or loose shingles, and in every respect but height resemble the sublime wildness of the Screes near Wastwater in Cumberland.

On the left of Scardona the river Kerka falls in, and about a mile up is the cascade. A wall of rocks runs across the river, shaded with every species of tree, and among them dash down a thousand streams : on the south is the principal, falling over as it were a multiplicity of steps with a regularity that seems the effect of art. At the foot, on different islands formed by the streams again uniting, are many little mills embowered in wood, every one of which would form a sweet picture. On the north side of the river, a short way above, is a very old aqueduct

covered with ivy, which at present conveys the water to one of the mills. Some have supposed this to be the aqueduct of Trajan, which extended as far as Zara; but there are no concurrent vestiges to support the idea.

We left the cascade at three o'clock, and arrived at Sebenico at seven. The creek is about 15 miles, forming itself at every turn into a succession of numerous lakes, but all the same barren forbidding scenery. We found H—w—ll just arrived at Sebenico, and hunting about the streets for accommodations, having been detained the two days by contrary winds. We met with our old difficulty in procuring rooms, but we had now learned to be less particular in our choice.

Sebenico, situated in a soil which it is impossible for art or industry to convert to any cultivation, and obliged to depend for its provisions on extraneous supplies, cannot boast of having been a favourite residence of man. The Romans never thought of settling on its huge barren rocks; but in later times it was a more convenient port than Scardona to carry on commerce with Turkey. The origin, indeed, of Sebenico is curious, inasmuch as it is connected with that extraordinary race of people

of whom the Venetian annals still tell many a tale,—the fierce invincible Uscoques. This little nation (for so it may be called) possesses such a romantic history, that it has tempted me to collect, as far as I am able, from the natives and history, some of the outlines.

The Uscoques were a band of pirates of the most savage and determined bravery. On the summit of the rock where now are the ruins of the citadel they first made their retreat: by degrees their power became more extensive, and their numbers and their plunder increased: they then constructed a few more huts at the foot of the rock with poles, which they term *sebica*, and hence rose the name of *Sebenico*. After the fall of Scardona many of the inhabitants joined the adventurous band; and their power and their renown rose to such a crisis, that their name carried terror through the Adriatic, and they have even ventured into regular wars with Venice, the first naval nation of the time. In fact, the corsairs of Lord Byron's muse were realized in the Uscoques; and the ruins which still crown that hill I could almost fancy to be Conrad's watch-tower, which "beetled o'er the bay." The first check that they received was the insurrection of their more peaceable citizens,

who, tired of this barbarous life, delivered Sebenico into the hands of Venice July 12, 1412. These brigands, however, though deprived of a settled home, were not the less formidable: fostered by the policy of Austria, they long scoured the Adriatic sea, till 1616, when they were completely subdued and dispersed.* Their manners and their intrepidity still, however, are preserved in their descendants; who, at the present day, are to be found in that wild country near Hungary, between Carlstadt, Næustadt, and Agram. So much do the Italians dread them even now, that they have taken the same precautions that Cyrus did with the Lydians, and most severely punish them if they find them wearing arms. Near the waterfall of Scardona we saw a small chapel, which tradition says once belonged to this singular race.

The town of Sebenico has been most strongly fortified, but all the works border on the middle of the seventeenth century: the walls bear the date of 1646. Two forts are erected on

* The Uscoques, we find, were in 1549 settled at Segna, placed there by the Austrians to be a barrier between Croatia and Turkey. They were driven from it to the mountains by the Venetians in 1576.

the hill which overlooks the town: one was built in 1649, the other ten years later, as this inscription over the gateway testifies:—

VALIDISSIMUM HOC IN HOSTES MUNIMENTUM AMPLIUS
TUTIUSQUE REDDERE SEDULO CURAVIT PRÆ-
STANTISSIMUS PROVINCIÆ PRÆSES ANTON.

BERNARD. D. MARCÆ PROCU. ANNO

SALUTIS 1659. BELLII VERO 15.

The town of Sebenico consists of narrow streets like Zara; but its cathedral is the handsomest religious edifice we had seen since we had left Venice. Its northern entrance is a superb specimen of Saracenic, rich with oriental profusion, while its near approach to Gothic has long rendered me a proselyte to its style. The traffic of Sebenico appeared to us to be particularly lively; but this might be owing to there being a fair during the time we were there. To this circumstance we were greatly indebted for seeing one of the customs of the Morlaques, the name of the natives of Dalmatia. On the festival of St. Anne they assembled in their great square and danced their national dance, which they term in Slavonic “kolo,” or circle. They hold each other’s hands across,

that is, the right of one person holds the right of the other, and, ranged in a circle, they proceed slowly round and round in a kind of step, and to the sound of a song or shout which they utter. After a certain time this changes to a quick dance, called “skorigori,” or high leaps, which is merely performing the same round quicker, and setting to one another with the most extravagant leaps. The women as well as the men are very much addicted to this amusement, and are equally riotous in the exercise. There was a wildness in the scene that I had hitherto been quite unaccustomed to. The shadowy light of the moon upon the rich Saracenic architecture of the cathedral, the fanciful costume and rude shouts of the dancers, the time, the place, and the action were in perfect but strange unison. Some fireworks closed the festival ; mere rockets and catherine wheels, which the good people thought superb.

We did not stay at Sebenico longer than was necessary, for the inn was not only infamous, but infested with vermin. To give an idea of what are called inns in Dalmatia, I find impossible ; but Baron Polnitz, speaking of those in Spain, mentions some of their traits. “ On ne

trouve rien dans toutes les auberges ; on fournit une chambre et puis c'est tout ; si l'on veut manger il faut tout envoyer acheter par ses domestiques et le faire préparer.”

CHAPTER IV.

SEBENICO TO SPALATRO AND SALONA.

“ L'Istrie, la Croatie, la Dalmatie étaient presque barbares ; c'était pourtant cette même Dalmatie si fertile et si agréable sous l'empire Romain : c'était cette terre délicieuse que Diocletien avait choisie pour sa retraite dans un temps où ni la ville de Venice ni ce nom n'existaient pas encore.”—*Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations par Voltaire.*

ON Monday, July 28th, it had been our intention to have set out extremely early on our voyage, but the governor most civilly sent down to us, as he wished to show us his collection of coins ; and we of course were obliged to sacrifice an hour to etiquette, in following him through his museum. The most curious of his antiquities was a bronze plate : on one side was a representation of our Saviour and the twelve apostles, and on the other (an odd conjunction) Julius and the eleven Cæsars.

When we were able to embark, the wind was so low that we could not proceed further than Ragonizza, a small bay, the first in the territory

of Trau. The same barren country still continued; so much so, that we were not able to procure any provisions; and as the wind proved equally calm on the morrow, we began to view the decrease of our sea stock with a little anxiety: however, at about five we arrived at Trau, a town of some magnitude, situated in a small plain which extends from the mountains to the sea, and which, after the barren scenes we had seen, seemed delightfully fertile. Fruit, however, only is plentiful; corn grows with difficulty. The little islands, except Bua, are mere barren rocks; indeed, I cannot conceive a more correct idea to be given of this sea than by supposing a general deluge, where the little islands are the most elevated points of the mountains, by situation barren, which the waters have left uncovered; and this appearance is the more increased, as their shape is almost universally conical.

The city of Trau presents, as well as all the towns on the coast, many remnants of Venetian, but is still more devoid of relics of Roman, magnificence. The porchway of its cathedral displays some superb carving in marble; and the coup d'œil is so striking, as to cause a disappointment in the traveller when he sees the

dingy, cumbersome interior. A kind of mole connects the town with Bua; in the centre of which is a drawbridge, which, when viewed down the channel, makes a picturesque object, backed with the lofty mountains of Bosnia. On July 30th we continued our voyage, and arrived about 12 in the elysium of Dalmatia, the bay of Spalatro. The eye of the classic reader eagerly roves, of course, over the celebrated spot that could detain the greatest potentate of the time from the luxuries of a court, and induce him to resign "the pomp and circumstance" of power for retirement and oblivion. Without at present reflecting on the coup d'œil of situation, I will hurry again with the eagerness I then felt, to the superb mansion, that in the times of Rome was formed as a temporary retreat, but which is now, even in ruin, a wonder of the world.

The palace of Diocletian is an exact square: the front towards the sea, termed the Crypto Porticus, consists of a façade of arched windows, supported by pillars of Tuscan architecture, while at the extremities are two of Corinthian: the gate is low and undecorated; at present it forms the entrance into a cooper's shop. The whole of this façade is in tolerable

preservation, but much concealed by buildings of the lowest description, which have risen by the plunder of its very materials. On the eastern side is the Porta-Ænea, which now scarcely exists : the Venetians have raised another gate here during the last century. On the north side is the Porta Aurea, a superb entrance, in good preservation, and much more decorated than the rest. To approach the Porta Aurea we asked permission to pass through a private house, as it now stands in a garden : the earth has fallen in so as to conceal as high as the arch of entrance. Above the arch is a colonnade, formerly consisting of seven Corinthian pillars, but at present only three remain ; the niches and cornices are richly carved in basso-relievo. On the fourth and western side was the Porta-Ferrea ; but, owing to this side intersecting the modern city, very few traces now remain either of the wall or the gate.

On entering the palace by the Crypto Porticus, we pass the vestibulum, a round tower, not unlike the keeps of feudal architecture, excessively strongly built, but too ruinous now to be accommodated to any use. Leaving the vestibulum, we enter the peristyle, i. e. the inner

court, which always was in the centre of the ancient houses. Magnificence here bursts upon the observer from every side; behind him rises the front of the vestibulum, consisting of an elevated portico of four Corinthian columns, bearing a rich entablature; before him a straight direction will lead to the Porta Aurea; on his right is the temple of Jupiter, on his left the temple of Æsculapius. On each side of the peristyle extends a wing of six Corinthian columns of marble, granite, and porphyry, connected by a lofty entablature. The ascent to the temple of Jupiter is by steps, which lead to a colonnade, also Corinthian, that surrounded the temple; most of the columns, and some of the ceiling, still remain. The exterior of the temple is octagonal, the interior circular; but as it is supported by eight porphyrite columns, between which are eight niches, it also takes an octagonal appearance. There are two galleries that encircle it above: the upper one possesses a most curious whispering echo. By ascending these galleries also the inquisitive gain a much nearer view of the basso-relievo that ornaments the temple. Underneath the cathedral is a kind of crypt, or vault, in the corner of which arises a mineral spring. The temple of Jupiter remains

pure and entire wherever the busy hand of man has not been at work ; but having been converted into a cathedral, there have been made some necessary alterations, particularly the addition at the extreme end. The campanile also is the work of the Gothic age, and reared from the materials of the old palace : the top affords a correct idea of the town and palace, but, when we ascended, the ladders were so rotten as to be in the highest degree dangerous. Leaving the temple of Jupiter, we pass the bath on our right (the scanty remains of which are now enclosed in a private house), and arrive exactly in front of the temple of Æsculapius. The temple of Æsculapius is an oblong parallelogram ; nine steps lead up to a portico of four Corinthian columns. One only now remains : three were carried away by the French to *form a pyramid* on the west of the town ; and, since the expulsion of the French, were exiled to be the ornaments of a small church on the furthestmost point of the bay. The interior of the temple presents a flat carved roof of stone and a rich cornice, but is very inferior to the temple of Jupiter.

Mr. Adams has published a work (a copy of which is deposited in the archives of Spalatro,

and of which, by favour, I obtained a view), in which he has most ingeniously planned the whole palace, even to the bed-room of Diocletian, and has made some designs of the architecture. The style, perhaps, is rich in the extreme, but of too heterogeneous a mixture for my taste: Corinthian, Tuscan, and Composite are to be found within the space of a few yards. However, for grandeur of extent, and durability of workmanship, few antiquities can vie with the Diocletian. The traveller must not, indeed, expect to find the different apartments with the ingenuity Mr. Adams has done: it requires some care and patience to trace even the exterior wall. The city has grown up in the very heart of it. Sometimes it is to be found in the fronting of a house, sometimes it passes the interior, and not unfrequently totally disappears. The view, however, which I have described of the peristyle exists to the present day.

After having satisfied ourselves with these remains, and being desirous of making an excursion to Salona, five miles distant, we procured the sole carriage of the place, and walked outside the walls to meet it, few of the streets being wide enough for its admission. Salona was once one of the most flourishing colonies

that the Romans possessed in Dalmatia, and the theme of many a poet. Martial describes it as endowed with mines of value.

Ibis littoreas, Macer, Salonas,
Felix Auriferæ colone terræ.

Lib. 10. ep. 78.

Lucan here places the position of Caius Antonius.

Quâ maris Adriaci longas ferit unda Salonas,
Et tepidum in molles Zephyros excurrit Hyader
Clauditur extremâ residens Antonius orâ,
Cautus ab incursu belli, si sola recedat,
Expugnat quæ tuta, fames.

Lucan, lib. iv. 404.

What is Salona at present? Nothing but the enormous mass of stones points out her former strength, and the treasures daily dug up, her former opulence.* Leaving our carriage at a small inn kept by an old French veteran near the bridge, we wandered round her ruined wall, which can easily be distinguished from the more modern

* Salona possessed many magnificent remains in the 15th century, according to Giustiniani, viz. the arcade of a noble theatre, a column near the sea, where the arsenal was situated, and the ruins of many palaces.

heaps by its immense stones. On the side near the sea are the remains of an aqueduct and of a temple: near the latter lies a Corinthian capital, and by the river I saw standing under a barn a statue clothed in flowing drapery, of tolerable workmanship, but the head had been barbarously broken off and sold to an individual of Trau. Among the stones piled up to mend the road, grieved was I to see remains of capitals, cornices, and columns, heaped without reserve. The same destruction has been levelled against inscriptions, as they employ them to build their houses. One, however, I found in good preservation, and curious, from containing some poetry, as follows:

PAPIRIA RHOME V. F. SIBI.....
 PAPIRIAE CLAUDILLAE ANN....
 ET P. PAPIRIO PROCULO ANN XI:..
 CONDIDIT HIC MISERI MATER DUO FUNERA PI:::
 OSSAQUE NON IUSTIS INTULIT EXEQUIIS
 TEGULA NAM ROMAE PROCULUM PROLAPSA PEREMIT
 PRESSIT SIPUNTI PRESSA CLADILLA ROGUM
 VOTA PARENS NOCUERE TIBI QUI NUMINA SAEVA
 UT PLURA ERIPERENT PLURA DEDERE BONA
 ET P. PAPIRIO CLADO ET P. PAPIRIO
 CELERIO ET PAPIRIAE HISPANILAE.

The word *qui* in the last hexameter verse

ought, I suppose, to be *cui*, which renders the sense quite intelligible; the alteration would be nothing to a Leyden critic. There is a small room which was discovered at Salona a few years since, but which is by no means curious.

After procuring a little breakfast with our old soldier, and talking over his campaigns, we returned again through the lovely valley. It was, in fact, owing to its neighbourhood to Salona, and the beauty of the retirement, that Diocletian chose this spot. Having raised himself by his abilities from the rank of a private soldier to the diadem of the world, he, with a moderation seldom known, tranquilly resigned the weighty charge, and prepared again to pass the evening of his days in that “post of honour—a private station.” Whatever may have been Diocletian’s character, such a life was exemplary. A youth of toilsome industry, a manhood of honourable condition, and the close of his days in quiet and retirement. Twenty years did he pass in this seclusion. The vale was then, and almost is now, a garden. The hills to the west were formerly clothed in hanging woods, while against the walls of the palace washed a sea, which, with grandeur of extent, unites all the beauty of lake

scenery. Near, the grey mountains of Brassa and Bua close the distance. Lastly, the climate is most mild, the country fertile, and water, the only deficiency at Spalatro, was conveyed by an aqueduct from Salona, which may be traced even at the present day, and goes among the Italians by the name of Ponte Secco.

A traveller of tolerable research and perseverance might, without doubt, discover at Salona many antiquities of value ; (I was shown by individuals many cameos and coins of extraordinary beauty ;) but it requires both time and residence to collect them. Most of the Morlaques of whom we inquired produced some treasure that they had dug up ; but being ignorant of their real value, and considering them with a superstitious awe, they ask the most ridiculous price : those also who are not the proprietors of the soil are afraid of showing what they find, since whatever possesses any value is often most cruelly wrested from them without any reward. All that I was enabled to procure cheap, was a bronze triton in excellent preservation, and an early gold Roman coin. In all our researches we were most kindly assisted by Signor Vincentio Solitro, who accompanied us to Salona, and obtained us admission to many

antiquities we should not have otherwise been able to see. In fact, there has been so little travelling on the coast of Dalmatia, that the inhabitants are eager to assist every stranger to the utmost of their power.

With respect to the modern part of Spalatro, it rose after the destruction of Salona, and is constructed principally out of the ruins of the palace. The Venetians conceived it to be the most convenient port to carry on their trade with Turkey, and hence, till within these few last years, its commerce was considerable; but the lazaretto in which the goods are deposited is now burned down, and the strict quarantine that they are at present forced to undergo, in a miserable building up the country, deters much intercourse. The French, during the time of their possession, employed their taste, as usual, in forming a public promenade at the west end of the town; but the spot is little frequented, for in the evening, the only time in this glowing clime for exercise, an adjoining sulphureous spring emits a most intolerable odour. The waters of the spring are famous among the inhabitants of the country for their medicinal efficacy. If we had stayed long enough, a gentleman of the town kindly

offered to analyse them for us ; as it was, he wrote me an account of their ingredients, which, though not curious in that particular myself, I will copy at the end of the chapter.

At this end of the town there is a still more delightful walk, along the promontory to the little church, where the pillars from the temple of *Æsculapius* now stand. The last evening before we left *Spalatro* we walked thither ; and the landscape that lay before me, as I was seated on the extreme cliff—the scenery—but most of all, the colouring of that landscape, would appear a fairy illusion to all who never passed the Alps. *Byron* alone has described, *Claude Lorraine* painted, the

“ Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven.”

The sea beneath our feet was spotted with numerous little isles, among which the fishing barks were sailing home to their respective ports. One small vessel struck me as peculiarly picturesque : it belonged to a *Dalmatian*, who was seated in all his wild costume, steering, holding the sail, and at the same time playing on a little rustic pipe. We sat enjoying the

view till quite dark, talking over old England. It was the furthestmost point in our travels that we intended to go, and we could not help looking to

“ The precious jewel of a home return,” *
even with the paradise of old Illyria before us.

Copy of the Analysis of Professor Charles Bignami.

Analyse des eaux minerales hepatices ou idro-sulphureuses de Spalatro ; par des livres pharmaceutiques delayés d'eau de pluie.

Gas hydrogène sulphure trois fois le volume de l'eau minerale.

Muriate de soude,	drachms 15	grains 20
Muriate de magnésie,	———— 1	———— 14
Muriate de chaux,	———— 0	———— 20
Sulphate de magnésic,	———— 2	———— 10
Sulphate de soude,	———— 6	———— 30
Carbonate de soude,	———— 0	———— 46

* Shakspeare.

*Analyse des eaux minerales salines de Verliesa, village de
l'arrondissement de Spalatro.*

Pour chaque livre Italien pharmaceutique de l'eau minerale,

Muriate de chaux,	-	-	grains,	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{52}{60}$
Muriate de magnésie,	-	-	_____	$\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{47}{60}$
Carbonate de chaux,	-	-	_____	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{9}{60}$
Carbonate de magnésie,	-	-	_____	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{30}{60}$
Silice,	-	-	_____	$\frac{1}{20}$	$\frac{30}{60}$

CHARLES BIGNAMI.

August 2d, 1817.

CHAPTER V.

RETURN FROM SPALATRO TO VENICE.

By adverse winds and faithless billows cross'd,
A listless wanderer on a foreign coast.

Smith's Verses at Sestri.

ON Sunday, August 3, we embarked on our return; but the wind proved to be unluckily the Maestral, and we were driven down into a small bay in the island of Solta. There are two winds which alternately, and I may almost say exclusively, prevail on the coast of Dalmatia, the Sirocco and the Maestral. The Sirocco however has not, as in most countries, any further prejudicial effects than to cause great lassitude. The Maestral, or north-west, we observed generally blew from sun-rise to sun-set; and, what was most unusually unfortunate, continued for a week together. The island of Solta affords a fine prospect, being the reverse view of what we had seen the evening before: the port of Spalatro was lit up by a setting sun; above rose the fortress of Clissa, and far to the east

the grey mountains of Seign that form the barrier of Turkey.

The following day we were not able to advance beyond a little solitary bay near Ragonnizza. As we passed under the island of Bua, we could little wonder that it was the selection of an exile branded with effeminacy.* Julian perhaps was unaware that this spot was exempt from the general desolation of the coast of Dalmatia, when Florentius was left in tranquillity among vineyards and olives. So invincible is the scarcity of the other coast, that when on Tuesday, the 5th instant, arriving near Trebocconi, we found ourselves completely destitute of provisions, our only resource was to send a foraging party inland, and money and persuasions at last procured from a peasant a sheep and two fowls, which we led down in triumph to our bark, and were obliged to eat not many hours after they were killed. In fact, in this warm climate meat will not keep longer than two days. After some further delay at the island of Mortri, we arrived on Friday, the sixth day, at Zara. The low land of Zara almost appeared a fertile valley after the country

* Gibbon, vol. iii. page 234.

we had seen, though, in fact, they possess nothing in real abundance but melons, and these by no means so fine as at Spalatro. The lower orders of people, from their cheapness, make them their principal food.

As we are on the point of quitting Dalmatia, it may not be ill placed to make some remarks on that singular race, which form its population, and are perhaps the wildest people of Europe.

The Morlaques, notwithstanding the rudeness of their appearance, and the thousand stories that are circulated of them, always appeared to me to be a people naturally affable, and when so, certainly sincere. Their industry is as invincible as the aspect of their soil is uninviting; but their labours are much impeded, and their hopes cruelly blighted, by those mountain robbers of whom I before spoke, and whose vicinity cause even the more peaceable to go armed. The mills of the Morlaques, though I do not feel myself mechanic enough to describe them, seemed ingenious contrivances, borrowed, they say, from the Turks. Some picturesque buildings of this kind I saw at Scardona and Salona. The Morlaques are in general a race of stout and almost gigantic form; and if their spirit, wild as their native rocks, could submit to dis-

cipline, would make excellent soldiers : as it is, they form an useful check to the Turks. The men shave the hair off their foreheads, but plait it to an enormous length behind : even the boys, whose hair has not arrived as yet at sufficient growth, have tails (often of a different colour) fastened to their head on gala days. The women are universally of a masculine appearance. Their costume, as well as that of the men, varies in different villages, but their waists are always as low as the hips ; and I have seen in Dalmatia many figures not very unlike our ancestors in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

The climate of Dalmatia is more dreadfully oppressive than that of Italy, owing much, I suppose, to the reflection of the sun on the stony soil. In most towns the principal shops shut up during the time of the *siesta*, and few but the working class venture out. To a traveller a still more grievous nuisance was the number of vermin ; so much so, that on our return, one of my comrades and myself abjured sleeping on beds, and preferred our great coats in the bark. The quantity of flies at Spalatro also is inconceivable : it really was the only inconvenience in Diocletian's retreat : the vendors are obliged to be always on the alert to drive

away with small rods of paper the swarms that settle.

The warlike character that I have already mentioned of the Morlaques, and the situation of their country, difficult of access, abounding in rocky creeks, and void of native supplies, are ample reasons for the number of Corsairs which have reigned as little tyrants of Dalmatia. The Uscoques I have already spoken of. The pirates of the Narcuta were equally celebrated; but there was a Corsair of later days who infested these seas, who was born with a genius and inclination fit for more noble purposes than mere piratical marauding. Lambro Cazzoni, if successful, had been the hero of the age—unsuccessful, he is forgotten. He was born at the island of Zea in the Archipelago, and from infancy entertained a truly Grecian inveteracy to the Turks. Under the encouragement of Russia he endeavoured to establish the liberty of his country, and for that purpose embodied a small but spirited band of patriots, when the peace between Russia and Turkey, in 1792, was the first check to his hopes. Disdaining, however, to relinquish his project, he established himself at Port aux Cailles, on the summit of a mountain, where there was an almost impregnable

fortress. He there proclaimed himself King of Sparta, and christened his young son Lycurgus. For a long period his little fleet carried terror through the whole Adriatic, but a sad succession of disasters at last drove him from his retreat, pursued him from island to island, and in the end forced him to have recourse to the protection of the Emperor of Russia. So perished the last struggle of Greece for liberty.

After being detained two days by the wind at Zara, where we were destitute of amusement and obliged to rest the whole day panting with heat, the long wished-for Sirocco sprung up at five o'clock on Sunday, August 10, and we left Dalmatia for ever. For a long time the lovely convent that stands towering on the loftiest pinnacle of a little island remained in sight, and as the white clouds floated midway up the mountain, it seemed actually separated from the world below. At eve we arrived at the island of St. Pietro, and anchored under a ruined fort which once defended the pass, but which our navy among other exploits on the coast had reduced to ruin. A little goat now was the only tenant of the broken wall: he was the property of a fisherman, who while employed before the fort in his occupation, had

brought him over there to eat, and who willingly accepted our offer of some bread for the milk.

The second day we arrived at our former post near Pola: a little circumstance here reminds me of a deficiency in this extraordinary land which I had forgot to mention. A small boat came alongside of us in the day, and begged us to give them a little fresh water, as they had not tasted any for three days. In fact, throughout the coast, the peasants are obliged to lead their cattle to water during the day, often from a great distance; and then the wells are sometimes nearly putrid. At Zara and every other town, it is procured at great expense from afar, and at Spalatro it was a well known deficiency. The horror of such a scarcity in this glowing climate may be well conceived, and reminds us of many scenes described in Scripture, as Palestine was subject to exactly the same misfortune.

We were detained some short time near Pola by the discovery of a leak; and from this, together with the obstinacy of our sailors, we were not able to proceed farther than Parenzo. Of all sailors Italians are without exception the worst. The difference between the Greeks and

Romans of antiquity and their descendants, “οσοι νυν ερωτοι εισιν,” is too well known; nor is the change less striking from the conquerors of Lepanto to the sailors of modern Venice. Whenever a slight gale sprung up, or the sky appeared at all cloudy, our crew immediately wished to run into port: they had very little idea of tacking against the wind, and though it was specified in our agreement, positively refused to sail by night; to conclude the whole, when we arrived at Omago, though the wind and the day were most propitious, they were afraid of facing the main sea to cross to Venice.

However, about ten o'clock on Wednesday night, owing to our most vehement protestations and the abatement of the wind, they ventured out; but the consequence of the delay we could clearly have augured, the sea was still actuated by a heavy swell, although the wind had entirely dropped. Under such circumstances, the rolling of the vessel entirely prevented my sleeping, and I amused myself with watching on deck the phenomenon which is so frequent in the Adriatic, the phosphoric appearance of the waves. On a dark night it has a truly

fine effect, to see the large interminable expanse of ocean thus partially illuminated.

About the middle of the succeeding day we found ourselves opposite the town of Caorle, and about four o'clock on Thursday the fourteenth of August we re-entered Venice by the port of Lida. Her thousand cupolas rise with much more majesty as viewed from the sea, and particularly to us who had just traversed over spots big with remembrances of her conquests, adorned with works of her improvement, and from the north of Istria to the south of Dalmatia had seen the winged lion raised over every archway, and carved on every fortress. She had every where beat back the Ottoman powers beyond the mountains of Bosnia, and was also able to exclaim with Pompey,

— Cum signa tuli toto fulgentia ponto

Omne fretum metuens pelagi pirata reliquit,

Angustâque domum terrarum in sede poposcit.

Lucanus, Lib. ii. 578.

CHAPTER VII.

LAZARETTO, VENICE.

“Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts,
“Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair.” *Cowper.*

THE few following pages were written I may say in imprisonment, an imprisonment unexpected, and in some measure unmerited. On entering the port of Venice and having declared that we were come from Zara, to our great dismay we were sentenced by the officers of *la sanita* to a quarantine of a fortnight. In vain did we assure them that there were no symptoms of the plague in Dalmatia, nothing remained for us but to write our case to the consul. We received a very civil answer, but, alas! the decree was inevitable; Mr. Scott, however, promised that we should have the best accommodations in the Lazaretto, but for that night we must sleep on board the bark, and we were

accordingly anchored close to a stinking embankment of mud, in the heat of the dog-days, in a country noted for its insalubrity. On the morrow a superintendant of the Lazaretto came to conduct us to our destination: we were put into a separate boat, which none but our own mariners were allowed to row, and conducted along the Lagunes to a small island about two miles from Venice, on which the Lazaretto is situated. Large shallows of mud extend round the unwholesome retreat. A wooden scaffolding is built across these to form a landing-place, which leads to a small porch in a high wall, and beyond little can be seen from without.

Our feelings, it may be supposed, were not the most enviable, as the gateway opened to enclose us. The governor and the person destined to be our guard were in the interior to receive us, the former smoking a long Turkish pipe, with which he took care to keep us at a very respectful distance. We were then shown an extensive suite of rooms, the best I have no doubt that there were in the Lazaretto. They were situated on one side of a quadrangle; there were four bed-chambers and a

kitchen, all communicating with a long corridor or gallery that ran round the court, and at the extremity was a little latticed pew looking down into the chapel*. The rooms faced into the governor's garden, but with windows closely grated: the walls were white-washed, the floors bricked, and without one single article of furniture. It was a place indeed which, together with the twilight, the hour in which we saw it, was sufficient to render us at least uncomfortable. Night was approaching, and there were no signs of the arrival of furniture or provisions from the inn. Our guardian, on seeing us hesitate upon the choice of rooms, *kindly* endeavoured to dispel the difficulty, by telling us some one had died in each; and to raise our spirits, added that two Neapolitan captains were at that time ill, and it was supposed of the plague. At last our necessities arrived, and we soon forgot our fears in the amusement of furnishing our rooms; and after having passed twelve nights in a confined ves-

* Since my return to England I have opened Howard's work on Lazarettoes, and by his description discover that the philanthropist once occupied the very same apartments as ourselves.

sel always sleeping in my clothes, the luxury of a bed was no small consolation.

On the morrow we employed our ingenuity to provide our prison with comfort and amusement ; we first had our rooms thoroughly washed by our servants, and camphor burnt in them all : we then explored the whole interior of the Lazaretto ; and in order also to have a clearer idea of its form, ascended to the top of the tower of the church.

The Lazaretto was formerly the convent of St. Maria, and though there are many tokens left of what was its first destination, in the form of the building, the chapel, and remains of sacred pictures, still it has for a long time been applied to its present purpose. It contains about eight or nine quadrangles, some surrounded with apartments, but the greater part with long warehouses for the reception of merchandize. About the centre of the Lazaretto is the chapel, decorated as usual with tawdry pictures ; half of the quadrangles, *i. e.* those on one side of the chapel, are dedicated to such persons as coming from Alexandria or the Levant are sentenced to forty days quarantine ; they have also a small gallery defended by iron

bars in the chapel, in order to keep them entirely separate from the rest. After the expiration of the forty days, they are admitted on the other side the Lazaretto, where they remain again one week ere they are released. In the other part, in which we were, there are five quadrangles, not including the governor's domains ; but of these only two were surrounded by habitable apartments, the one in which we lodged, and the one where the market was held : all the rest were appropriated to the merchants' goods. When we were in the Lazaretto, the number of its inmates certainly did not exceed twenty, and these were all of the lower description—to such are appropriated the apartments on the ground floor, which are generally very dark and unwholesome. To those who can afford to pay, the first floor is allotted, but the price is never fixed, and rather consists in a present to the governor on leaving. All the rooms, to avoid their harbouring any infection, are left entirely destitute of furniture, and I cannot even say they are kept in very good repair : the windows never shut close, and the ceilings admit the rain most lamentably. I must however own that our own rooms, if it

had not been for the iron grating, had a pleasant view over the governor's garden and the Lagunes.

In the next quadrangle adjoining to ours was the market. The venders were admitted by a private door, and two low walls about four feet high, and placed at a proper distance, prevented any communications with the purchasers. It is a received and curious fact, as the readers of Lady M. W. Montagu must be aware of, that the plague is not to be caught either by the air or breath, but merely by the touch, hence every thing received into the Lazaretto is handed across these walls in a small basket affixed to a long pole ; whatever is returned, if money, is dropped first into water, if letters, &c. undergoes a fumigation ; the provisions brought to the market are generally of the worst description, as they are supplied by inferior vendors. At one end of the market, as also in the exterior court, are places apportioned for the reception of visitors : the same precautions are used here, to prevent approach, as in the market. At another extremity of this quadrangle is a building which proves to be the hospital : it is from its inscription also that I

conceive the convent has long been applied to its present use. The Lazaretto, I have since heard, was established five hundred years ago, and is said to be the first building of the kind in Europe. The inscription, as follows, is in no very elegant Latin.

HOSPITALE VETUSTATE COLLAPSUM DIVI MARCI PROCURATORES DE . . CITRA VERI PII AC SOLI GUBERNATORES UT QUI A LANGORIBUS CRUCIANTUR COMMODIUS LIBERENTUR SUMMA CURA INSTAURARE JUSERUNT ANNO SALUTIS NOSTRAE MDLXV MENSE MAZO

this is copied literally.

The governor has a portion of the building, and a garden entirely dedicated to himself and family: the latter consists merely of a wife (whom we first took for his daughter) about five and twenty, and his household. The governor had passed thirty years in the navy; but on the French obtaining possession of Venice, his abhorrence, he told us, to their nation, forced him to accept his present office in order to avoid fighting under them; he however soon intends to resign it and retire to his country house near Padua. It was ridiculous to observe sometimes in conversation how he forgot himself—well aware that we were confined for no substantial reason,

he would advance towards us, and then, remembering we must not touch, would suddenly draw up. The family also always came to church without any fear of infection. His attentions to us were particularly marked; he even offered to remove the iron grating, but as for this we must have had a person from Venice, we declined his offer. He constantly went about with a pipe, and so strongly did he recommend the practice, that during our stay we accustomed ourselves to smoking segars. Terrible indeed are the mephitic vapours that are exhaled from the Lagunes, especially at night: it was most imprudent to walk out after sunset, and we were also cautioned against taking too much sleep. Our rooms were so exceedingly damp, that meat, fruit, &c. always turned mouldy in them after a day. However, as we used to smoke in them late at night, this in some measure counteracted the effects. On one night, August 21, I particularly recollect we were obliged to rouse our servants at midnight, owing to one of the most tremendous storms I ever saw: not like those in our climate, where the lightning bursts in flashes and is followed at equal intervals with thunder, the sky seemed here one constant flame of fire, and the rain

dashed in so violently, that in a few minutes the brick floors of our rooms were entirely under water : this will give some idea of the exposure of this little island.

Our time, it may be supposed, was not passed in much variety : the books that travellers in general incumber themselves with are not many in number ; these were soon exhausted, and the enclosed court where we walked did not induce us to stay longer in it than was necessary for exercise, as it afforded us no view. It was therefore no small gratification to us to see in the chapel, the Sunday after our arrival, the friendly face of our good monk of St. Lazzaro *. After service, he paid us a visit at the grating, and offered to perform any commission we wished at Venice. He is, it appears, chaplain to the Lazaretto. The following day also an old Ch. Ch. friend who was at Venice came out to see us, and this was all that relieved the monotony of our stay.

The principal source of our complaint was the unwholesomeness of a situation where every attention ought to be paid to health, since, in other respects, their cautions against

* This was an Armenian monk, whom I had alluded to in the journal which I kept in Italy.

the plague are by no means unwarranted. Once we may recollect, Vitale Micheli, a doge of some renown, was sacrificed for introducing it into his country; and two of the noblest churches in Venice were erected to commemorate their deliverance from this dreadful malady, the former in 1576, the latter in 1631: to the former, the venerable Titian, at the age of ninety-nine, fell a victim. Satisfied that our imprisonment was not entirely divested of reason, nothing remained but to amuse ourselves as we could. The view of Venice, luckily, from one of our windows, was the best I have seen of that city, and it was a melancholy pleasure to watch the busy scene from our confinement.

“ Here at my window I at once survey
 “ The crowded city and surrounding sea;
 “ In distant views the ‘ Tyrol’ mountains rise,
 “ And lose their snowy summits in the skies.”

The former votaries of St. Maria would have continued—

“ Yet not these prospects all profusely gay,
 “ The gilded navy that adorns the sea,
 “ The rising city in confusion fair,
 “ Magnificently formed irregular,
 “ Where woods and palaces at once surprise,
 “ Gardens on gardens, domes on domes arise,

“ So sooth my wishes, so adorn my mind,
 “ As this retreat secure from human kind.”

Lady M. W. Montagu.

The evening before our departure, our governor having *surmounted all fears of infection*, invited us to view his apartments, and to partake of a bowl of punch, a beverage for which all foreigners give us the credit of the invention. Though of course the most polished society was not to be expected from a man devoted from infancy to a navy, which ranks so comparatively low with ours, still we could not help being struck with the extraordinary *grossièreté* which he displayed in his conversation. His lady did the honours of the table, but her presence did not at all restrain the exuberance of his expressions, and in fact she laughed without disguise at many of his sallies. I hope, indeed, I am not to remember this as a model of Venetian refinement. The servants were desired to seat themselves in different parts of the room, and were helped at times to punch. The Governor, though he had behaved to us with a blunt sincere civility, did not induce us to prolong our visit longer than etiquette required. At retiring, according to custom, we made him a present of

some Napoleons for the rooms, and on passing through the hall the servants crowded round to present nosegays, and for each of these a gratuity was expected. The characteristic for which I shall ever admire the governor was his truly Venetian enmity to the French; it extended even to their language, which he declared of all the transalpine nations was the most grating to an Italian ear.

The Neapolitans in some measure shared in this aversion; their moral character has certainly produced a saying, that Naples is a paradise inhabited by the devil, but this was not their crime with the governor, he dwelt with peculiar emphasis on their *ignorance**.

* The governor, during our sojourn in the Lazaretto, procured us the keys of those quadrangles usually shut up; hence we had a view of all the extensive magazines. At one corner of the island is the burial ground; a small portion is inclosed within walls for the Christians, among whom are the remains of an English captain, who expired there but a short time since. Not a single stone points out where the poor victims lie, but the whole is planted thick with Indian corn, which has sprang up to nine or ten feet in height: little mounds round the enclosure prove the number of Turks whom this dreadful calamity have swept away. Above the inscription, which I have mentioned a little before, are three

On Friday, August 29, we left the Lazaretto,
I hope for ever!

statues, which the governor illustrates as St. Mark, St. Sebastian, and St. Roch. The last saint expired of the plague, and for this reason has received the dignity of being patron of Lazarettos.

SICILY, MALTA, AND CALABRIA.

1819.

BETWEEN our return from the Illyrian provinces and our departure for Sicily there was an interval of more than eighteen months, the greater part of which had been passed in Switzerland and Italy. Consistent with my first resolution, I say nothing of those countries, now as easily travelled over by a library fireside as in a *voiture de poste*; and, where tourists, in general, shut the book, I beg to reopen my Journal.

CHAPTER I.

NAPLES TO PALERMO.

Here gushing founts and streams, that never fail,
 Pour health and plenty through the smiling vale ;
 Fair smiles the vale, with myrtle hedges crown'd,
 And aromatic fragrance breathes around.

Wright's Horæ Ionæ.

WE are now leaving Italy, and fain would my pen run wanton in her praise ; but have I not been anticipated by every traveller who has passed to the south of the Alps ? The associations interwoven even from infancy with her name, which press upon us, as we enter Italy, have been described by an elegant enthusiast*. The feelings, on bidding her farewell, have burst from one of her own sons ; one truly *her own* in genius and in principle. Yet the impressions of Ugo Foscolo are too melancholy for me to encourage, when I leave a

* The archbishop of T——, a great friend of Eustace, and an *Italian*, still termed him an enthusiast.

country, where, in the admiration of what she has retained, I have forgotten what she has lost; where the arts, manners, climate, scenery, have contributed to the happiest hours of my past life, and will form the most pleasing recollections of my future; nay, to sum up all with Alfieri, “Dopo molti altri viaggi e molta piu esperienza, i due soli paesi dell’ Europa che mi hanno sempre lasciato desiderio di se sono stati *la Inghilterra e l’ Italia.*”

It was the evening of the 24th of March when we embarked on board the *St. Antonio*. The happy crowd of Naples, as we passed through the *Largo di Castello*, the doors of the *Fondo* open for the night’s spectacle, made us almost repent of our resolution in leaving a place where five months had been passed without a moment of satiety and ennui. The next morning when we rose, we were south of the island of Capri, and its bold rocks shut out *the happy bay* from our sight. The early part of our voyage was prosperous: on the morning of the 26th we were near the island of Ustica, and in view of the shores of Sicily. Far to the left rose a huge conical mountain, covered entirely with snow, which our captain called “*il Vesuvio di Sicilia;*” in fact, it was Etna. Though actually

in sight of the Lipari islands, the fabled residence of Æolus, we found the want of one of those little bags mentioned by Homer, for we were becalmed the whole day, and our only amusement was sending out a boat to catch a fine turtle that was basking asleep on the water. We succeeded in the *prise*, and supped upon the fin. As for our crew, their diet throughout the voyage was bread and salad ; it was the season of Lent, and whether religion or economy was the cause I know not—perhaps both.

The calm continued till the evening of the 27th, when a fine breeze springing up carried us at night-fall into the bay of Palermo, too late however to land. The outlines of Capo di Gallo, and the rocks which enclosed the bay, assumed, in the dusk, a thousand fantastic forms : many, jutting from the rest, appeared like islands, while the lights glittering in the town seemed actually an illumination, from the sombre contrast of the mountains which swept round it. My first glance of Sicily was indeed enchanting.

Early on the morning of Sunday, March 28th, we landed at the gate of Palermo, and, to our surprise, found an inn (the Prince of Wales),

kept, to the smallest minutiae, in the English style. Palermo, and in fact all Sicily, is one of those few spots left in Europe where the French have never intruded their principles or their manners, never at least since the Easter vespers of 1282. Peculiarly connected with maritime interests, she was allied, during the late war, to English politics, defied all Murat's endeavours, and may still cite the incident above alluded to as a proverbial taunt*. It had, I must own, to me a most delightful effect, to reach a place with all the luxury of a southern sky, and more than Italian beauty, untinctured by the continental manners—to hear my own language, and eat an English dinner on the shores of the Mediterranean.

We walked out in the town after breakfast, and were delighted at the style in which it is built. Four streets branch off from a small circle in the centre of the town, at right angles to one another, and are terminated by the four gates of the city. They are wide, well paved

* When Henry the Fourth exclaimed in anger, "I will, if provoked, breakfast at Milan and dine at Naples," the Spanish ambassador added, "Your majesty may perhaps arrive in Sicily for vespers."

with broad flags, and accommodated with foot pavements. The regularity of the town reminded me of Turin ; but there was something in the architecture and general appearance of the houses so totally different from the cities of Italy, or indeed any other country I had yet visited, that I was at a loss to trace the impressions produced by their effect. The whole was explained by remembering Palermo to have been of Arabic origin. In the long balconies, shrouded from observation by a close iron cage-work, and enclosing the upper and best suite of rooms, I imagined I saw the precautions of Moorish jealousy, in adapting these promenades for the inmates of the haram. The cornices of the houses were ornamented and painted *à l'arabesque*, and, standing before the cathedral, I beheld the pointed arch, the fretted turrets, and all the grotesque carving on cupola and minaret which distinguished a Moorish mosque. On the left, the gate by the palace was of the same decided style of architecture ; and its prevalence, after a lapse of eight centuries, will be the less surprising, when we recollect the country, which succeeded to so long a sway in Sicily. The Spaniards are half Saracens by descent and character, and both would direct their taste to the Moorish antiquities, with

which their southern provinces abound : in fact, I could picture to myself a strong resemblance to the towns of Andalusia in the times when,

“ On the land as evening seemed to set,
The Imaum’s chant was heard from mosque or minaret*.”

The Piazza di Marino, in which our inn is situated, is of a different character, not unlike the *place* of a French town, being unpaved and irregular ; the houses, however, are an exception : the inferior sort seldom exceed two stories, and many of them occupied only by one family, instead of the habitations of France and Italy, containing a village. The day being Sunday we entered the cathedral : the pleasing simplicity of the interior little corresponds with the fantastic ornaments without ; but the numerous confessional chairs, which, in the more secluded aisles, were occupied by priests and crowded by penitents (more than I ever saw in France and Italy)—again led the fancy to Spain. For those who preferred oratory to prayer, a Capuchin was exerting his lungs from a chair in the centre of the town, where the union of the streets caused many involuntary listeners, and never left him without an audience, however transitory.

* Scott’s Don Roderick.

In the evening we drove to the celebrated Marino, a promenade reckoned the most delicious in Europe. It extends along the eastern shore of the bay: a handsome garden, succeeded by fields and lawns on the right, and the sea rolling in on the left. Well may the Sicilians esteem this spot! Those alone who have experienced the indolence and ennui of their sultry mornings, can appreciate in its fullest value the cool evening breeze and the enlivening prospect of an Italian sunset, with the effects which they produce on health and good spirits. The greater part of the nobility kept their carriages stationary, reclining back and inhaling the sea-air: the lower orders walked on a superb quay between the road and the sea, which—but stop—it shall be described in its own *elegant* Latin inscription:

Serius Ocyus
Ut sese habeant res
Eas aut redeas
Post passus in littore factos
Sexies centum quadraginta
Hic contraque quies*.

* This last line (as is perhaps necessary to explain) refers to *two benches* at each end of the quay.

Even the walls of the city, being surmounted by balustrades, are made to contribute as an ornament to the ride. We finished the evening at the theatre, which is larger, I think, than the Fondo at Naples, but plainly ornamented. The boxes, which are almost all taken by the year, were well filled. Our opera was, “*Il morte di Adelaide*.” The scene is laid in a Carthusian convent, whither a mistress, in male attire, follows her lover and dies; not that this melancholy catastrophe excludes the appendage of a buffo, and an opera half serious half comic was to me strangely unpleasing. The recitative was here displaced for a prosaic dialogue; yet if ever there was a language to which recitative seems natural, it is the Italian. The songs even acquired little force from the melodious but weak voice of Signora Fabre*.

March 30. We made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santa Rosolia, the patron saint of Palermo. A steep stony road, formed on a causeway, winds from side to side of a ravine: it is the only method of surmounting the crags of the Monte Pellegrino; and, after a toilsome

* I had just left St. Carlo: the reader must excuse me if I appear fastidious.

march of three miles, some little oratoires (before each of which the pious will be seen to stop and mutter a prayer), give notice of the approach to the convent, now raised over the grotto where the bones of the saint were found. Under a grating in the centre of the grotto reclines a lovely marble statue of the young Rosolia, with whose bewitching countenance Brydone was enraptured: it is in the attitude she died. From the mouth of the cavern the view falls upon a little branching vale, where is one of the pleasantest casinas of the king, surrounded by gardens. The history of poor *Rosalie* gives a remarkable lesson of the trials borne by enthusiasm: daughter of William the Good, she left her father's court at the early age of fifteen, and passed the remainder of her days in this solitary cave, among barren rocks, and in sight of all the luxuries she had left in the vale below. I was abusing the tinsel robe and gilt ornaments, so little accordant with the characteristic simplicity, and so disguising to the beauty of the statue, when a marble inscription told me it was a *deed to be extolled*, and that Charles the Third had given two thousand scudi for that purpose.

On our return we deviated from the road to a cross, whence the best view of Palermo is to be obtained. In a valley of about twelve miles extent, surrounded by an amphitheatre of craggy hills, and on the borders of a tranquil bay, stands the city. The palaces of the nobility, the numerous convents and monasteries, give it the appearance of being the best built as well as most regular city in the south of Europe. The mole is crowded with merchant ships, and the bay enlivened by fishing-barks. “The valley,” as Brydone declares, “is one of the richest and most beautiful spots in the world: the whole appears a magnificent garden, filled with fruit trees of every species, and watered by rivulets that form a variety of windings through a delightful plain.” But to us the greatest attraction was to see the verdure of the fields, and the trees already in full leaf, after the more arid environs of Naples. Well, indeed, does Palermo deserve the epithet of Felix! I know not whether it is from gratitude to these blessings, but many of the carts and cottages had the inscription on them, “Viva la divina Provvidenza.”

March 31st. We drove to Bagharia, a kind of Frascati to Palermo, where most of the nobi-

lity have erected villas. The palace of the Principe di Palagonia still exists, as when it excited the exaggerated ridicule of Brydone ;* but its marble statues and porcelain columns are deserted, and yet many of the apartments are so comfortable, and the prospects so splendid, that, in my opinion, they deserve a better fate. A whimsical fancy has also directed the taste of the Principe di Butiro, who, in the garden of his villa, has formed a certosa, which he has peopled with monks in wax-work. Each cell is fitted up with a bed and the furniture usually allowed in a convent ; while the inmates are severally employed at prayers, reading, &c. : in one room, a convivial party over a bottle of wine is not the least characteristic. At the further end of the gallery one cell is occupied by a female figure in the dress of the order, whom they call the beautiful Adelaide. It immediately carried my thoughts back to the opera. This story appears to have excited great popularity at Palermo.

* I have since seen General Cockburn's work, in which he justly attacks Brydone for exaggeration, giving, at the same time, a correct description of the palace. We, like the General, in vain looked for the *pillar of tea-pots, with a certain utensil for the capital.*

In a room adjoining the suite occupied by the monastic brotherhood sleeps a *naked Venus* in wax-work, surrounded by Cupids. Was the Prince directed by satire, when he gave the fraternity such a neighbour?—The plain of Bagharia is, by nature, a garden; the corn fields are often interspersed with picturesque rocks; but art has done its utmost to spoil every inherent advantage by fanciful erections of pagodas and temples, arches and grottos, with all the vile creations of bad taste. None of its palaces are equal to that of Principe Belmonte, on the western promontory of the bay.

The Sicilian women are said to be very handsome; and though, in our short stay, we were not fortunate enough to see any of *those forms* “which,” as Lord Byron says, “flit by us when we are young;” yet, after Naples, I will own they do not suffer in the contrast. Their complexions appeared to me fairer, perhaps from a greater clearness, than the Neapolitan; there was a higher expression of countenance, and totally free from a certain vulgarity which is attached to the lower orders at Naples; but, above all, we have here some *faces of youth*. I heard it remarked at Naples, that there was but one step from infancy to decrepitude.

Time has carried away much of the formality that Brydone describes : ladies of rank walk frequently on the Marino and in the streets, simply attended, as in England, by a servant. An indolent state still forbids this in Italy, where, with the exception of a few promenades, they venture nowhere but in a carriage. Yet English influence can hardly have produced this change in Sicily ; for English influence, we well know, has been seldom exerted to promote the adoption of its own customs. Enthusiastically fond of all that relates to his own country, an Englishman is indifferent to see them become general with others. As far as concerns himself, he is too apt to follow his own inclinations, disregarding of the country he is in, or the dispositions he meets ; but his foible goes no further, and he is as jealous of interfering as he was of giving way.* The government even have been actuated by similar feelings ; and hence, while French innovation was spreading over the continent, Sicily remained the same,

* This may seem inconsistent, after what I stated early in the chapter ; but the truth is, that where English customs have been adopted, it has been a voluntary act, and not unfrequently, I must own, as a flattering allurements to our travellers.

even in her errors. Superstition was spared ; and, at the present day, I was assured that half of the population of Palermo consisted of the clergy. In the towns and villages it is the same ; the streets are thronged with the priesthood ; the finest buildings are monasteries and convents ; while, through Italy, “ sad and sunken Italy,” this nuisance, at least, is swept away. The only reform we undertook we have failed to secure ; and, while we overturned one constitution to prepare for a better, the Sicilian nobility and people now complain we have left them none at all.

The evening after I wrote this I took up Moore’s travels ; in which (letter 31) he speaks of the abhorrence of the English for foreign manners. This failing, if it be a failing, may arise from a strong perception of the absurdity which accompanies, and the bad effects which ensue, from the adoption of customs strange to our country, and uncongenial with our education ; and the very same feelings, if the inference may be drawn further, would induce them to forbear introducing a foreign influence abroad, which they so strongly deprecate at home.

CHAPTER II.

PALERMO TO GIRGENTI.

————— We will search
 The monuments of Time, and there peruse
 Those forms of Genius, which in vain we seek
 Amidst the living tenants, firmly traced
 On lifeless marble and on sculptured stone.

Hayworth.

IT would have excited a smile among our friends in England if they had seen our procession the morning of April 3rd, when we left Palermo. The mule that carried our baggage (of which the apparatus of kitchen and larder formed the greater part) led the van, while one of our guides comfortably enthroned himself among our pots and kettles; a machine resembling a *vis-à-vis*, carried on poles between two mules, which they term a *lettiga*, followed, in which I sat, somewhat like the prints of the Emperor of Japan. Another guide, who walked by the side, seemed to

endeavour to drown the jargon of a thousand bells suspended to these mules, by the most discordant cries. Mr. H—w—ll and his servant closed the cavalcade, the latter, armed cap-a-pee, and with most terrific mustachios, though last, was certainly not the most insignificant personage present.

We soon mounted over the stony hills which enclose Palermo, and gave one last look of admiration on that lovely garden. We were then to traverse heights, much more desert than any I had seen in Switzerland, to arrive at a valley far more fertile. The country of Alcamo presented to our view an uninterrupted plain of verdure ; except some few vineyards, the whole is one cornfield, without wood, without enclosures ; and, in the centre, on a rising ground, stands the town, commanding a large extent of country, but, except in name, betraying no signs of Moorish origin. I entered its broad irregular street with a little anxiety about our accommodations, as this was our debut among the noted inconveniences of a Sicilian tour. The inn to which we were taken was certainly not so bad as many in the Grisons ; but we had to search over the town, and buy

every article that we required for dinner, and pay also exorbitantly dear.

Early the next morning we left the great road, and, following a dangerous track over an open country, about ten arrived at the foot of the hill on which stands the only relic of Sergesta,—the temple of its founder. It is built in all the manly simplicity of the Greek temples; the only specimens of which, that I had yet seen, are at Pæstum: the columns are here also Doric, but differ, as being unfluted. In site, however, what can be more perfect than this temple! Stationed on an eminence which looks down various valleys, waving with green corn, the hill on the right clothed with wood, the deep dell to the west enclosed by rocks. I begrudged such an edifice and such a situation to the hero whom Homer made a coward, and Virgil a canting egotist. We breakfasted at the little rivulet at the foot, and then continued our march: we had now no track to guide us, and our muleteers were directed entirely by the tops of the mountains. Large wolds, barren, or at least uncultivated, extended up hill and down, as far as the eye could reach: no enclosures stopped our progress, but we were obliged occasionally to make

some detours, by arriving at large tracks of corn, which our muleteers religiously avoided crossing. We seldom met a creature, at times perhaps a few herdsmen, who were watching their cattle on the hills that afforded the best pasturage. Their large dark cloaks, their arms, (for they were all armed,) the miserable hovels of straw before which they lay stretched, were fit accompaniments to so solitary a landscape. We passed no town during the day but that of Salemi, a dreary place, which seemed to be crumbling with the precipice on which it stands.

After travelling thus from sunrise to sunset we arrived at six at Castel Vetrano. The whole population were coming out from vespers, for it was Sunday; the men in large cloaks with hoods, the women entirely in black, with black mantillas, which envelope their face all but the eyes; and those eyes are most fascinating ones. The countenances of the Sicilian peasantry are the reverse of those of Naples: their features are well formed, and always void of vulgarity, that striking characteristic of the broad Neapolitan face; but, hungry and tired, it was not at this moment, certainly, that I stopped to physiognomise. We had

heard that there was a large empty palace in Castel Vetrano, belonging to the Duca di Monteleone, and, as necessity precludes ceremony, we asked permission to sleep there. “*Audaces fortuna juvat:*” the keys were sent for, and we were conducted through some large desolate saloons to a chamber at the extremity of the suite, where there were a few chairs and a bedstead. Again we had to send out for provisions, &c. ; the maestro di casa procured us more mattresses, and we had leathern sheets with us. This person had been many years resident in England, and has lately been sent from Palermo to this solitary abode. He conducted us the following morning to the armoury ; and, while he was showing us the musket of some great general, a former Duca di Monteleone, took occasion to lament the constant absence of his master, and the dilapidations of his abode. This prince possesses, besides all the country round Castel Vetrano, seven other towns ; and his revenue being immense, he neglects all those means of improvement which benefit both the possessor and his country : here is another of the evils of overgrown property.

“ When to sickly greatness grown,
They boast a florid vigour not their own.”

April 5th.—We departed for the ruins of the celebrated Selinunti. They stand on a rising hill, overlooking the sea, and in the middle of a common covered with under-wood. At the distance of some miles, its colossal pillars and stupendous fragments, though merely of three temples, appear like the watch-towers and walls of a city: I was actually deceived. The first that we approach is the most gigantic. We hesitated in conceiving it the work of human hands; and when once raised it might have defied human destruction. Its columns are stretched at regular distances on the ground, the capitals all lie as they must have fallen: in fact, no doubt can exist that the ruin was occasioned only by an earthquake; and neither the curiosity or avarice of man has been able to disturb these gigantic relics; ages may now roll on and they will remain the same. The first and most colossal is the plainest, the other two are of fluted columns. These three temples, in the invasion of the Carthaginians, formed a refuge for the unfortunate inhabitants. Here articles of capitulation were granted them; historians say, for fear they should, in despair,

destroy themselves and the temples. Posterity would think the latter impossible. Hardly any other vestiges exist of “*Palmosa Selinus*.” Castel Vetrano impudently usurps its title, and inscribes over its gate, “*Palmosa civitas* ;” but all must agree, that the one overthrown and deserted is more splendid in appearance than the other, entire and populous. We took our morning meal, according to custom, among the ruins, on the lawn at the foot of the great temple ;

Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them.

Byron.

We continued our route the principal part of the day along the coast ; and when we did diverge inland, the country was still the same, uninclosed, chiefly running to waste, but, when cultivated, producing a hundred-fold. Sicily resembles a child of brilliant talents and neglected education ; the genius that we do see makes us lament that which is undeveloped ; the capacity at first view astonishes, a longer acquaintance shows its defects.

Sciaca, where we intended to sleep that night, stands on a high cliff overlooking the

sea: its exterior appearance is handsome; and one white building in particular caused a wish my friend that we could have expected lodgings there. On entering the town, however, streets irregular, dirty, and unpaved belie its exterior. We halted in the market-place; the hovel they called an inn was full, and we remained above half an hour, encircled by a mob gaping with curiosity, while our servant applied at the convents with an appeal to their hospitality. After some entreaties, a college of Jesuits agreed to accommodate us, provided it was only for one night; but the next day they expected two of their fraternity from Palermo. The superior welcomed us at the end of a handsome corridor, received us in a most friendly manner, and begged us to attribute any inconvenience to their being unaccustomed to admit strangers. He then led us to two very neat white-washed apartments, provided beds and a lamp; and, throwing open the windows, showed us a charming view over the coast, when we discovered, for the first time, that fortune had conducted us to the white building we so much admired from below.

We left our good Jesuits on the morrow with the most grateful thanks. This day was spent

as the last,—the same scenery,—the same solitude,—roads hardly passable,—huts hardly inhabitable. The pistachio tree grows in abundance near Sciaca: this tree never bears fruit except in company. The day's journey was forty miles; and it was not till evening that we beheld the port of the modern Girgenti. The town is situated four miles inland, upon a lofty rock, where stood the former citadel: and as we wound to it, over hills and through dells, towers commandingly in the distance. When we entered, however, as usual we met nothing but meanness and filth. Our first halt was at the convent of Dominicans, and the superior civilly gave us the rooms usually occupied by strangers; but, upon applying to the brother who keeps the keys, he was so offended at not being asked first, that, turning his back, he said, “questo non e un' albergo per gl' Inglesi.” Sooner than be obliged to such insolence, we accepted the offer of a lodging in a private house; and the host being a cook, we perhaps fared much better than in a convent during holy week, as he managed to dress us an excellent dinner of various dishes out of two fowls. What an acquisition for an economist!

Early in the morning we rose, anxious to visit the great Agrigentum: we passed round the exterior of the town in our way, and were fascinated with the prospect which presented itself. We had seen little of that romantic country since Palermo, that could render Sicily the land of eclogue: we now witnessed a scene worthy of its fame; and I shall translate a letter from Reidesel to Winckelmann, as giving a most animated description. “Represent to yourself, my friend, a glacis which extends four miles in length, and six or seven in breadth, on each side, from my window to the sea. This glacis covered with vines, olives, almond trees, the finest corn already in full ear (the 7th of April), excellent vegetables; in fact, all the productions which the earth can furnish, in the most agreeable variety; the possessions of the different proprietors separated by hedges of aloes and Indian figs; more than a hundred nightingales filled the air with their songs; and, in the middle of this enchanting country, the temple of Juno Lucina, in excellent preservation, the temple of Concord, entirely perfect, the ruins of that of Hercules, and of the colossal temple of Jupiter, which appear in the distance. Could not one well exclaim,

“ hîc vivere vellem,
 Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis,
 Neptunum procul e terrâ spectare furentem.”

Beautiful as was the scene, however, I did not join in the wish of the quotation, but I have been led rather to mention this description from a curious coincidence. It happened exactly on the same day of the month, April 7th, that we saw it, and there was not a trait of difference in the scene or the season to mark the lapse of fifty-two years.

We hastened along, under a burning sun, through the valleys, where we found *these olives* gave us but little shade. On all sides, fragments of columns, cornices, &c., used in walling in the fields, reminded us we were traversing the site of Agrigentum, till, climbing a declivity, we rested ourselves on the steps of the temple of Juno Lucina. Before we entered, I cast my eyes around. All the principal ruins extend in a line on the summit of a rising ground, running from east to west. Much of the town, I suppose, extended over the vale we had just traversed on the north, as far as the modern Girgenti, the ancient capitol. The low ground to the south our guide declared was the ancient port; yet, though it has some

physical appearance of this, in the centre still exist the remains of a temple to Æsculapius, which prove the sea never came in so far. Clambering over the fallen pillars of this elegant temple we referred to Brydone's Sicilian tour, and were told, that here was once deposited the *chef d'œuvre* of ancient painting,—the Juno of Zeuxis, who formed this standard of female beauty from the separate charms of five young girls of Agrigentum.* This reputation for beauty has been handed down to the natives from ages; but, muffled as they are under the black mantilla, it is not easy to see many specimens; those, however, retain the Grecian expression, which is a characteristic inseparable from the *beau idéal* of antiquity. I am almost inclined to think, that there is some other reason, besides the command of jealousy, for thus covering the face, since I observed the men as well as the women, generally wrap, even in the warmest weather, their cloaks over their mouths. A long line of ruins, which are denominated sepulchres, reach from this temple to that of Concord. The temple of Concord

* So says Brydone. It has generally been attributed to Crotona; yet Zeuxis was a Sicilian.

remains perfect to this day, with the single exception of the roof. Its proportions, its simplicity, have entitled it especially to the esteem of travellers. It is not so imposing as it is pleasing; and what it wants in size it gains in interest: the wall as well as the colonnade is perfect, and thus clears up all doubts of the interior being enclosed from open day. I had observed remains of the interior wall at Pæstum, but was told at the time I must be deceived in the temples of Juno Lucina and Concord; the plan of the one being so well preserved, and of the other, in a measure, perfect, leave not a doubt upon the question. It was with the greatest reluctance that we left this model of ancient taste; but the sun forbade much delay, the heat was almost insupportable. The next temple is that of Hercules: this is almost entirely in ruin; but it is interesting from having once possessed the picture of Alcmena, which Zeuxis presented, conceiving no price was worthy of it; interesting also for the resistance which it made to the rapacity of Verres, and from its site being in the Forum. The last object we approach is one of the wonders of the world. Reidesel does not hesitate in declaring, that the temple of Jupiter Olympius was far, far more noble than St.

Peter's at Rome. Diodorus Siculus engages in a minute description of its dimensions; and a small idea of its magnitude may be conceived, when he asserts, that a man might stand in each of the flutes of the columns. Pæstum, the colossal ruins of Selinus, sink into insignificance before this giant. In fact, Europe now cannot produce aught of similar proportions. The inhabitants of Agrigentum cannot but believe that this was the residence of an ancient race of giants: hence, they have given it the name of Tempio de' Giganti, and have taken as their arms three figures of giants. Little now can be traced of the temple; but the exterior wall, to the height of a few feet, its pillars, and capitals, lie around, many buried, by their weight, in the soil. Yet, when we recollect that it was erected before the Carthaginian war, never finished, exposed without roof to the inclemency of the seasons, neglected both by the ancient and modern citizens, is it not surprising that it stood whole and uninjured till 1401?

In a field, at the foot of the hill of Agrigentum, stands a square tower, in nowise remarkable, but as an instance of the vicissitudes which the relics of other times undergo in the decision of antiquarians. This

once was the sepulchre of a king, of the illustrious Hiero, raised by the gratitude of his subjects; rescued, according to Diodorus, from destruction by the interposition of Heaven; and respected by even enemies. It then was discovered to be a Roman structure; and now is said to be raised to the memory of—a horse! Two other ruins, the one at the Capuchin convent, the other forming a part of the Chiesa di S. Maria de' Greci, are at Agrigentum; hardly worthy of notice, except the connection which they reciprocally hold in history. In the first, the temple of Ceres, the people of Agrigentum were assembled, celebrating her rites, while Phalaris, taking possession of the latter (which is the temple of Jupiter Polieus, and situated in the citadel), usurped the crown.

We employed the morning of April 8th in the town of Girgenti; first viewing the cathedral, then the public library. The former contains a *chef d'œuvre* of basso-relievo, which, for me to describe or extol, would be but to repeat what has already been the sentiment of every man of taste. The story is that of Hippolytus and Phædra. The hero is, in my opinion, the perfect image of a perfect man; and not even the Apollo Belvedere surpasses it.

We went to the library, not to see books, but medals, and especially those of Sicily. All the coins of Agrigentum bear on the reverse a crab; those of Syracuse a Pegasus. I am not perfectly aware of the origin of these insignia.

Having now determined to include Malta in our projected tour, and, while visiting the country of Grecian refinements and arts, at least not to forget the rocky isle where Chivalry breathed her last sigh, we agreed with the captain of an English vessel, conveying corn to Malta, to depart with him that evening. Nor was I sorry to leave my noisy and even dangerous lettiga, in which I had been buffeted for four days. It is extraordinary, but the natives of all countries conceive noise assists labour. My muleteers, besides attaching bells to all parts of their mules, kept constantly shouting out a short sentence to beguile the time. The boatmen of Naples, the bearers in India, and even our English sailors, all have their different cries which accompany their employments.

In the cool of a fine evening, as we descended from Agrigentum to the port, I was more than ever struck with the beauty of the landscape that surrounded me. For a panorama no scenery would be more charming; few spots

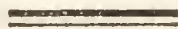
more interesting. If we had not found at the convent of Dominicans all that hospitality which urged the nobles once to invite every stranger into their house; if the marvellous luxury which Diodorus relates of Agrigentum is now confined to bread of the finest quality and excellent wine, still we had seen enough, and more than enough, to be

“ The lasting testimony of ages past.”

And the long chain of events, connected with the great Agragas, could hardly desire a more “ lasting testimony” than those which remain. It has, indeed, been a favourite tenet with enthusiasts, to depreciate all modern works in comparison with those of antiquity, in undertaking, in execution, and in durability. After my admiration of Agrigentum, I may, without prejudice, combat this opinion. The world, one would suppose, becomes daily more civilized; this civilization, particularly in free states, is, perhaps, inimical to expensive undertakings unconnected with utility. A pompous monument is suggested by pride, and executed by a despot: its expense is a burthen to the people, its glory rests but with one. This is a reason why, with us, the works of government are few. But, look

to the undertakings of Louis XIV., Napoleon, and a long line of Popes ; are they inferior to the tyrants of Sicily and the Cæsars of Rome? England will boast comparison with the liberal improvements of Athens or Rome when a republic. We have societies with the liberality of the Alc-mæonidæ, individuals with the patriotic pride of Agrippa. If climate or material give more durability to antiquity we are yet to learn ; and yet

“ He who first rear’d their frame, believ’d perchance
He rear’d them for a few short years.”



Observations written after seeing the Temples of Sicily.

The Greeks built their temples from east to west, the entrance usually fronting the former ; and in Sicily there is no exception to this rule.

These temples are all built in the Doric order ; the number of columns are usually 36 or 34 ; and, with the single exception of Sergesta, without bases. The columns at Sergesta, and in the large temple at Selinus, are simple ; but at Pæstum, in Italy, in the two smaller

temples at Selinus, and at Girgenti, are fluted ; and then the flutes to Doric columns are 21 in number.

It would be impossible, at all events, to fix any standard for the proportions of their temples ; and, especially, when the measurements of travellers so frequently differ. Reidesel says, page 22, “ Les deux temples ont pour longueur le double de leur largeur ainsi que tous les temples de ce genre.” Now Reidesel is not only mistaken in attributing this standard to all Doric temples, but peculiarly unfortunate in the two examples he has selected, as being both very wide from it. The temple of Jupiter at Girgenti approaches nearest these dimensions, and this not entirely. The large temple at Selinus is the next, but with much difference. The others are, in length, from two and a half to three of the breadth ; and, to prove this, I will subjoin an estimate I made of the different proportions.

Sergesta is, in length, $2\frac{1}{2}$ of the breadth, deducting $\frac{1}{10}$.

Selinus, 1st, ————— 2 ————— adding $\frac{3}{11}$.

———— 2nd, ————— $2\frac{1}{2}$ ————— exactly.

———— 3rd, ————— 3 ————— with the addition
of a fraction.

T.ofConcord, ————— $2\frac{3}{4}$ ————— adding $\frac{7}{66}$.

Jupit.Olymp. ————— 2 ————— adding $\frac{3}{16}$.

From this estimate it will appear, that the second and third temple at Selinus, mentioned in Reidesel as being in length double of the breadth, are far from such proportions; and that the standard, if any standard can be made, ought rather to fix the length at from two and a half to two and three-fourths of the breadth. And in these proportions the temple of Sergesta, the second at Selinus, and of Concord, have some affinity:

Sergesta being in the ratio of 7 to $2\frac{1}{4}$.

2nd at Selinus ————— $7\frac{1}{2}$ — 3.

Temple of Concord ————— 7 — $2\frac{3}{4}$.

Sergesta, 224 palms in length, 90 in breadth; with 36 columns, not fluted, each 25 palms in circumference, and 8 palms in diameter at bottom, 6 at the top; with base, which is 2 palms high, 8 broad.

Selinus, 1st temple, 400 palms in length, 176 in breadth; the columns are plain, with the exception of the four corner ones; the diameter is 13 palms, or, according to Reidesel, $10\frac{1}{2}$; the architrave is 27 palms long, 9 high.

2nd temple, 240 palms in length, 96 in breadth; with 36 columns fluted, with 21 flutes: diameter is $5\frac{1}{2}$ palms, and are higher, in proportion to their breadth, than usual.

3rd temple, 290 palms in length, 93 in breadth; the columns also fluted with 21 flutes, in diameter $7\frac{1}{2}$ palms; the architrave 16 palms long.

Girgenti.

Temple of Juno Lucina, with 34 columns, fluted with 21 flutes.

Temple of Concord, 185 palms in length, 66 in breadth; with 34 columns, fluted.

Temple of Jupiter Olympius, 430 : 9 : 6 in length, 212 : 9 in breadth : it was supported on pilasters as well as columns : the columns 42 palms in circumference, fluted, with flutes 2 palms in breadth ; the pilasters were 9 palms square. The length, in palms of Palermo, 442 ; breadth 228.

N.B. The dimensions of the temples of Selinus are taken by Biscari in cannæ : 1st temple, 50 can. : 22.—2nd temple, 30 can. 12 p.—3rd temple, 36 can. 2 p. : 11 can. 3 p.

Hamilton says, a Sicilian cane is $2\frac{1}{8}$ yards English. I have reckoned the cane at 8 palms, as they do at Malta,

CHAPTER IV.

GIRGENTI TO MALTA.

But not in silence pass Calypso's Isles,
 The sister tenants of the middle deep :
 There for the weary still a haven smiles.

Childe Harolde, Canto ii. 28.

ON the evening of April 8 we sailed from Girgenti in the English vessel *Anne*: we had the breeze, which always at sunset on the coast of Sicily blows off shore, whatever wind there may be further out at sea. In fact, after proceeding about fifteen miles, we were becalmed, and continued thus during the whole of the following day: too well could we judge of the justness of Virgil's remark—

Arduus inde Agragas ostentat maxima longe
 Mœnia.————

We did not lose sight of them till twilight: when the horizon began to darken, it lightened more vividly than we in northern

climes can have an idea of: the wind rose violently from the S. E., and about midnight the storm came upon us: it continued without abating for the two following days, and those who are acquainted with the sea round Malta may judge that our situation was not the most secure. This sea was the terror of the ancients. Cicero calls it “valde periculosum;” and the Sicilian speroneras will never venture across without a most favourable wind: the waves break short and irregular, and there is always a swell in the calmest weather. No port appears along the inhospitable cliffs of Gozzo or Malta: there are many hidden rocks off shore; and the loss of the “Lively” on this coast was still in our remembrance. In addition to this, the gales of the Mediterranean are the most capricious of the winds: it is not unfrequent to see vessels at very small distances sailing with quite different breezes, and they often suddenly change from one point to that entirely opposite. We were in sight of Gozzo on the morning of the 10th, and struggled with the contrary wind for 48 hours; the corn with which we were laden choked up both our pumps, but fortunately our vessel leaked very little, or our situation

would have been rather perilous*. At eight o'clock, on the evening of the 11th, we anchored, to the inexpressible joy of all, under the famed castle of St. Angelo, in the port of Valletta.

The town of Valletta is peculiarly pleasing to an English eye, handsomely situated on a hill, which juts out between two bays : all its streets bisect each other at right angles, are well paved, with trottoirs, and very clean ; the houses are of white stone, seldom more than three stories, and all ornamented with enclosed balconies, lighted by windows. The cleanliness and regularity of the streets, the moderate height of the houses, combined with the view of our troops on guard, our manufactures in the shops, and our language almost universal, gave the town an English look that I had some time been unaccustomed to. This little country is, indeed, if I may use the expression, fast nationalising, though there are still some who remember with affection old times. The spirit of chivalry has yielded to the genius of Com-

* I have learnt, since my arrival, our danger was greater than I thought. Our bowsprit had been carried away, and the water on the 11th gained on us from the leaks caused by the accident.

merce ; and the change is, in my opinion, too violent. Mercantile pursuits seem to monopolise their minds ; for it has given a turn to the well known industry of the natives. It will hardly be believed, that there is not a bookseller, at least not one that deserves that name, in the island of Malta, and that the only history of the place is to be found in the garrison library. While bustle reigns in the port, the city is solitary and dull : the public garden formed for their amusement without the walls, by Sir J. Ball, is never frequented : the theatre has no performers, nor can stony roads, a country without shade or beauty, afford much recreation in excursion. Malta, in modern times, is but a large mercantile warehouse ; it is indebted for her interest to “ long forgotten days.”

In one of these fine spring evenings, glowing under the lively purple tint, which Brydone well describes as peculiar to a Maltese sunset, to mount up to the terrace to the south-east of the city, to view the rich colours spread over the isola, the darker shades of St. Angelo, the little wherries that are constantly traversing the port, the fishing barks making for the narrow entrance,—to gaze round at the immense fortifications, bastions, ravines, as far as the eye can

reach, gradually sinking into gloom—the famous fort St. Elmo behind, the only martyr to Turkish power;—a mind very moderately enthusiastic may then well be excused for reviving in fancy all those scenes,

“ When the fierce Saracen, o’erwhelm’d with shame,
 “ Despairing fled, and cursed the Christian name.”

Beauty may give pleasure, but history must give the interest. One of our first visits was to the castle of St. Angelo: this fort, defended by a quadruple row of guns, and placed at the extremity of a peninsula, was the last hope of the knights in the Turkish siege: it commands the entrance to the port, and covered the station of their gallies. Here the grand master, the great La Vallette, retired; here their councils were held. A small chapel contains the ashes and monument of De Villiers, the second father of the order: this chapel has become a stable to the commandant of the fort, and a white slab of marble, much effaced, only now remains to relate the ten years’ wanderings of this true cavalier, his sufferings in the cause, and the zeal with which he ultimately fixed his order in Malta. One might feel indignant; but in an evening’s walk through St. Elmo I

discovered a lonely turret, on the front of which I saw a marble slab, *equally in bad repair* and neglected, to mark the grave of the brave Sir R. Abercrombie. There is a small balcony in St. Angelo that commands the most beautiful view of the port and town. Here the grand master used to witness the departure of his fleets on any expedition: the anti-room to this has now become a workshop. The whole of St. Angelo contains vaults and magazines of immense size: some refractory American prisoners were confined in one during the last war. It is very ill ventilated and gloomy; but their thoughts seemed still to have turned to their home, and they have amused themselves by drawing on the wall a large figure of an Indian.

The same morning that we visited St. Angelo we went round Fort Ricazzoli, which is situated on the east promontory of the harbour, and intended to guard the town from all approaches on the high ground to the right. This fort is only remarkable from a circumstance which happened in 1809. Some Albanians, seduced into our services by promises of being made officers, and soon cruelly undeceived, were stationed in these works: disappointment

caused them to revolt. They seized the fort, put two officers to death ; and being ignorant of the manner of using the guns themselves, they forced the captain to load and fire the mortars at the town : he first put in a very small charge, and the shells fell short, till this was perceived by the rebels, and he then charged them so highly, that they fell over into the opposite bay. The Albanians stood out a week : famine forced them at last to surrender, but not till many of them, in despair, had blown themselves up in the powder magazine. This will give some idea of the strength of the works, when even a small portion of them could hold out thus against the rest, and on the side least defensible.

We continued our researches in this part of the town again the following day, April 23. In a Greek church is preserved the hat and sword of their hero, La Vallette. The one is little befitting a stately knight, being not unsimilar to those carried by our coal-heavers, the crown covered with silk. The sword is old rusty iron : this rust has long effaced, if there were any, the marks of infidel blood ; but the notches in the edge seem to prove that it has done its duty. Near the church, on a pillar

stands the figure of victory: thus far and no farther came the Ottoman arms, and all their efforts never could penetrate that portion of the city which stands on the land base of St. Angelo*. In a narrow lane a few steps farther is the palace of La Vallette: unless it had been kindly pointed out to me by a gentleman, I never should have discovered it. The lane in which it stands is confined and dirty: its front is in nowise remarkable, except from some hideous busts sculptured over the door, the likenesses of the former grand masters: a narrow court in the interior is filled with rubbish; the doors are mostly walled up, and the paupers, who now endeavour to seek shelter among the ruins, the very dregs of the people. In this *palace* of the grand masters the hero La Vallette was the last resident: his successors removed to the new town on the other side the port; the building was left to decay, and is now an apt illustration of the palace, where “the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.”

The bat builds in his haram bower,
And in the fortress of his power
The owl usurps the beacon tower.

* Such was the story of our old guide: it is not however true. The Turks never penetrated the lines of the Borgo now called Vittoriosa.

The Turkish slaves were formerly imprisoned in some dreary vaults at the foot of St. Angelo: they are now more jovially tenanted, being made the wine-cellars of Mr. Woodhouse, and contain his famous Marsala wine. The arsenal of Malta, that nursery of her triumphs, which used to breed terror in the Turks and spread the renown of chivalry over the world, is at present, alas! but a magazine of stores. We visited it from respect to its former fame; but the docks from which her gallies were launched are now neglected, for as all supplies of timber, &c. are necessarily extraneous, it would be useless to support them. The machine, which is still employed for fixing masts into ships, is said to be, after one at Brest, the best in Europe.

We now leave that part of the city which may be aptly termed *classic* Malta. Though miserably deserted, and ill paved, in comparison with Valletta, in my opinion it is far more pregnant with interest. In these narrow streets dwelt the true spirit of chivalry: here she gradually increased in glory and reputation, till, reaching her climax in the Turkish siege, she preserved this her only remaining refuge from the invaders, and stamped it with the

title of *Vittoriosa*, the name which it now retains. After the retreat of the Turks, La Vallette being warned, by the capture of St. Elmo*, of the danger of leaving unfortified the opposite side of the port, began the works and city of Valletta, which was honoured by the name of her founder, and by her regularity and magnificence enticed over the knights from the old city. The government house, the eight hotels of the various nations, and all the public offices were here removed; nay, even the bodies of the more noble knights, of De Villers, and of La Vallette, have been transferred, if not to a more worthy, to a more magnificent tomb in St. John's. Under De Cottoner the impregnability of the place was established; those extensive lines termed La Cottonera were finished, in extent capable to contain the whole population of the island; in strength, to defy the world. He eluded also the dangers of famine: large magazines of corn were formed under the ramparts, and throughout the whole city (one of the largest of these is near St.

* De Villers had before been aware of the admirable situation of Mount Sceberras for a town, but his design upon Modon, and his exhausted finances, had delayed the execution.

Elmo), where the grain will remain for five or six years uninjured, owing to the dryness of the stone. Tanks were excavated in all the houses to contain water for a long period of time; and, as they depend chiefly on rain water, to provide a remedy for any unusually dry season, an aqueduct was extended to the city from Citta Vecchia.

With such provident works, why did the knighthood of St. John ever fall? from treachery. The last grand master, like the last Doge of Venice, betrayed his country, and the French entered here also as friends, to establish themselves as masters. Baron Hompesch, it is said, repented of his too easy faith, and died at Trieste of grief and vexation. One knight still exists in Malta; the rest have long left a country where they have become subjects. He always wears the badge of his order, a splendid velvet coat, wig, and cocked hat: this knightly costume does not accord with romance.

We might regret to see an order once so glorious thus sunk for ever—

“ But self-abasement paved the way

“ To villain bonds and despot sway.”

On the 9th of June, 1798, Bonaparte demanded leave to enter the port for water: this

being refused, on the 10th he attacked the place. Knights deserted daily, the men abandoned the walls, faction strove against faction, and on the 12th they surrendered. In two days surrendered the strongest fortress in the Mediterranean!! The Maltese did not so tamely submit to the yoke: abhorring the French with an hatred systematical, they first rose in a body at Citta Vecchia, and massacred all the French in the town. Stories scarcely to be credited are to this day boasted of by the natives, who describe their rejoicings to have been those of cannibals; that they actually devoured the hearts of their enemies. The small force of English that were first landed seems almost ridiculous, but the soul of the country was with them. The inhabitants of Valletta, to accelerate the surrender, threw into the sea the bread that was allowed: horses, mules, nay, even dogs, as the only meat that could be procured, were reserved for the hospitals alone. But the time of surrender must arrive, and Malta, in 1800, exulted in seeing her enemies, and the oppressors of her religion, driven out. Of all those countries ever visited by the French, Malta perhaps retains the fewest French memorials; not a sign, not

even a remembrance, save of passing disgust, would tell us that they had been here : but stop, one mark I do remember : between the forts of St. Angelo and Ricazzoli stands an unfinished palace, and so beautiful is its site, that their monopolizing general immediately fixed on it for his own. It has never been completed, but is generally known by the name of Bonaparte's palace.

With the English came a different policy : the natural industry of the Maltese revived with commerce ; their port, the only one during the war left open in the Mediterranean, was crowded by vessels of all nations ; the town and island received an accession of 30,000 inhabitants, and we must doubt whether, in the most glorious days of the order, Valletta exhibited such prosperity as under the protection of England. The ravages of the plague, and the opening of the continental ports since the peace, have in some measure depressed the resources and population of Malta ; but the removal, though tardy, of the transit duties will we hope encourage a more vivid commerce.

In Valletta, the present seat of government, are many monuments of that splendour which

the order lavished on their new city, the memorial of their triumph. Of these, the church of St. John's has been much celebrated; but it will not strike those familiarised with the churches of Italy. The pavement is inlaid with precious marbles, representing the arms and devices of the knights; yet the whole would not equal in value the altar alone in St. Martino at Rome, or be sufficient to decorate one oratoire of St. Peter's. On the right are certainly two elegant monuments of the Cottoners: in the one we admire the design, which is an African and a Turk in chains, and stooping under the support of the monument, while, in the other, the trophies in white marble, and the figure of charity giving suck to a child, must charm from their execution.

On the left of the church lies the inflexible Pinto; a man whom the Maltese still speak of as the most rigid governor of any of their grand masters. He seems to have been the Haroun Alraschid of Malta: he used incognito to enter private houses, hear the opinions of the inhabitants, and discover the abuses that required remedy. He was a Portuguese: among his countrymen power has too often been ac-

accompanied with severity: was it then from national character, or policy, or whence, that the prudent Pinto imbibed the maxims of Vasco de Gama and of Albuquerque? A remarkable conspiracy is related by Brydone, as being discovered in the time of this grand master: the coffee-house where the plot was overheard is still pointed out in the Strada Teatro, and many natives will relate the horrid tortures, the Turks suffered in consequence: their flesh was torn by hot pincers, and in their agonies they were paraded through the town. The Maltese appear to me to be barbarous in their character, when their passions are roused: their appearance, though fine and manly, has a savage cast; and such has been their behaviour, when in the prosecution of revenge, or the horrors of insurrection. The place where the instrument of torture extended may still be traced in the wall of the police office, and perhaps the features of government and of a people have often a strong resemblance: when the one becomes cruel, the other becomes barbarous*; in addition to which the Maltese, I suspect, in their passions, often

* Bossuet shows the effect a rigid government had on the Lacedemonians in making them brutal.

betray a Moorish origin. At the present day stories are told of the ferrymen at night flinging over passengers in the port for the sake of booty, and towards their children their conduct is most inhuman.

In viewing the palace I agreed with Brydone on its commodiousness. Its decorations are plain: the gallery is painted with actions of the cavaliers, particularly the famous capture of a Turkish seventy-four by the Maltese galleys, which are mere row-boats without decks. The use of such vessels seems very apocryphal: they were unserviceable during the winter, and never could go far from land. With all their boasted victories over the Ottoman arms, I was surprised to find existing so few Turkish spoils or trophies. In the armory, formed by the governor (a most handsome gallery, containing 15,000 stand of arms), a few muskets, and two sabres of Turkish manufacture are all the *spolia opima*. Yet I would not wish to doubt for a moment the glory of the knights of St. John, since it was no small amusement to me, during my stay, to picture to myself these scenes, renowned

“ For Christian service and true chivalry.”

I sought out the hotels, where each of the seven tongues held their councils: that of Bavaria (now the mess-room of the 36th regiment), commands a most open view of the sea, and imbibes all the northern breezes. That of Castile is an elegant pile, but now with broken windows and grass-grown courts. With a little national interest I traced out the hotel of the eighth tongue, that of England, which, supported by extensive revenues and estates, lived magnificently till the sweeping confiscations under Henry VIII. The knights, however, of this nation struggled on as late as 1630, when they were obliged to resign their albergo to Germany. It is situated in the Strada Reale, and near the Piazza di St. Antonio, with an inscription to the memory of Verdala. I am unable, satisfactorily, to account for the bust of an Italian being placed over the albergo of England: my supposition is this—the English knights had always claimed the title of Turcopolier for the chief of their tongue: on the suppression of Catholicism in England, the cavaliers of this nation became numerically insignificant; and, in all the later councils, I find the *Lingua d’Inghilterra* represented by knights of other countries. It being all but in name

extinct, the title of Turcopolier was given to Verdala when he arrived at the grand mastership, in 1582. Perhaps he, at the time that he took the title, received also the albergo of England.

Besides being Turcopoliers, the English possessed the priory of England, which was also the premier barony in parliament, the priory of Ireland, and the bailliage de l'aigle. In the office of the Turcopolier was included the command of the marine guards and cavalry (turcopole, in the language of the crusades, signifying dragoon). The tongue of England possessed also thirty-two commanderies, and in all attacks claimed the defence of the platform of St. Lazaro, and the gate between this and St. Christophero. In the great siege the English knights, with those of Germany and Portugal, occupied the mole of the Borgo.

A traveller in Malta will find some inconvenience from there not existing one good guide of the island: Brydone's tour is the most ridiculous and unsatisfactory book, to a stranger: he relates childish stories, certainly with a degree of humour; he saw little and talks much, and one knows not which to wonder at most, his having seen so little, or his spinning out two

volumes on what he did see. As the listless ignorance of a people who look no farther than trade makes the deficiency of a guide the more felt, the best plan to pursue is to take up Vertot's "*Histoire de Malthe*:" the interest will not only be increased by tracing each scene on the spot where it occurred, but it will insensibly lead him to all the memorials which are worthy of being visited.

CHAPTER IV.

MALTA CONTINUED.

Qui nelle fresche sue grotte stillanti
 Tenne Calipso l'Itaco infedele.

Pindemonte.

“ Oceanus Libya cum scinderet advena Calpen.”

CONSISTENTLY with this line, there has been a ridiculous idea with some persons, that the Mediterranean was formed by a violent earthquake severing asunder Spain from Africa, and the Atlantic rushing in and deluging all the low countries. The idea, I think, must have originated at Malta; for this island is exactly like the rocky barren summit of a mountain reared above the waves. There is no physical contrast of country greater than between Malta and Sicily: the latter with an exuberant soil, scarcely cultivated; the former with no soil at all indigenous, but formed, by industry,

into one of the most fertile spots in the universe.

I made a little excursion into the interior of the island, April 25th, in one of their vehicles, termed a “calesse;” which is the body of a chariot on two wheels, drawn by a single mule, while the driver runs by the side. The country of Malta is the most peculiar in appearance I have ever seen: though covered with fields of corn and cotton, they are buried, if I may so term it, from the eye, by being surrounded with stone walls, which bisect the country in every direction. No tree, no shrubs, rear their head above these; thus, as far as the view can reach, nought appears but heaps of stones, while, within the enclosures, the earth is most fertile. Nor do the numerous villages relieve or vary the scene: at a distance they differ little from the dead walls, and their situation is only marked by the cupolas of the really handsome churches which they possess. Their dull appearance will be conceived when I add, that the houses are never higher than the ground floor, without windows, receiving the light from the door: the streets are not paved, but extend in twists and turns often above a mile. In fact, I never discovered where

a town began or where it ended ; for there was little difference in the change from the stone walls which inclose the fields to those which inclose the dwelling-places.

About eight miles from Malta is situated the object of our excursion, Makluba (which, in Arabic, signifies abyss). This abyss, in shape nearly round, sinks perpendicularly among rocks to the depth of 60 feet. We descended into the bottom by a gully formed by the torrents, and found ourselves, to our surprise, in a charming garden, shaded by fig-trees and orange-trees, the rock clothed with vines, and producing fruits and flowers of all descriptions.

As this country was once under Arabic sway, whose language they still speak, I fancied myself on the spot which suggested to the oriental writer the idea of Aladdin's garden among the mountains of China. A superstitious tradition of the natives gives the following account:—that formerly a town stood on this spot ; but after a long series of unexampled wickedness, the ground suddenly gave way under their feet, and all the inhabitants were precipitated into ruin : a church, which stands at the edge of the precipice, was, from its

holiness, alone preserved*. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add, that the period of this catastrophe is unknown, and that no symptoms of such an accident now exist. One of the gentlemen with me seemed to conceive that it might have been formed by an earthquake; but its shape or appearance does not warrant that idea. There are no volcanic appearances to authorise its being an ancient crater; and if it were not that the material could more easily be procured, I should rather conceive it to be an old quarry, as its sides seemed worked by art. If I had seen the Latomia at Syracuse, I could the better judge. This garden, however, whatever was its origin, produces its owner an ample revenue. It undergoes, like the lands of Egypt, an annual overflowing of waters; but, from its situation, the soil is so perfectly secured, that the proprietor escapes the trouble incurred by many of his neighbours, who dig out and carry back their precious soil, which is washed by the rains over the road.

We passed by Zurico to the south-east ex-

* Abela seems to credit the tradition, and relates the story of some pious old woman who was saved in the church.

tremity of the island: the little island of Fyrfala rises a league from the shore, inhabited only by rabbits. A thick mist was stretched over the whole of the sea that divides us from Africa; but I suspect, that in the clearest weather the coast cannot be visible; for, though I have now passed a month at Malta, I have not yet seen Mount *Ætna* from hence, though Brydone declares it is so clearly distinguished.

May 9.—Curiosity carried me to Melita, the “*Citta vecchia*” of the island. The country is the same throughout Malta, some parts perhaps less cultivated, but every where rocky and forbidding. The road runs at the side of an aqueduct, which extends for eight miles, the structure of a sole individual, Wignacourt. Patriotism, to a certain æra in the Maltese history, seems to have been a triumphant feeling: and, when its ebullitions were not fostered by war, it, in peace, had recourse to utility: but I trace the works of De Cottoner and Wignacourt to another cause; this cause is an electoral government. In these dynasties, the ruling power, raised usually by merit, has no other claims on popular attachment but a continuance of merit; without hereditary ties, it has not even an hereditary reputation; and, to distinguish their

families and name to after ages, the only resource is in works like the present. A striking example of this is in the Papal succession; the more ambitious who have filled the chair of St. Peter have undertaken and given their name to various works; and, out of a multitude of names, these alone are familiar to posterity.

Citta Vecchia is situated on an eminence commanding a fine view of the island, if a view in Malta can be termed fine; it contains some good houses, which, during the war, were occupied by French officers of rank on parole. The cathedral is adorned with gilding and painting in fresco, while some of the side chapels are very rich: it surpasses, in my opinion, the present metropolitan church of St. John: but I was particularly charmed by the ceiling of the chapter-house, though hardly known, and rarely visited: it is the only specimen I have seen of the *beaux arts* in Malta. The painter is Zahra, a Maltese, and well deserves to be a favourite of Science, for he has painted her on the ceiling with angelic beauty. In the church of St. Paul, at a little distance, we became perfectly acquainted with the proceedings of their patron saint: his arrival and miracle of the viper, the cure, conversion, and martyrdom of Publius,

the governor, are here given in epitome by the Sacristan, who conducted us to a damp cave where the saint was confined, and presented us with some chalk that boasts more wonders than the elixir vitæ of our advertising quacks. Poor St. Paul to become an apothecary!! In the catacombs we were shown a chapel, mills, tombs, and bed-rooms, and passages which, because no one ever explored them, go, of course, the Lord knows where, “*omne ignotum pro magnifico.*” Our poor priest, at parting, made us a more acceptable present than his relics, in two beautiful roses, a flower which blooms here all the year.

But we now arrived at the most pleasurable part of our expedition; a spot, in Arabic, termed Mhintahlip, or valley of waters (tahlip signifying spring), and remarkable for the fecundity, which arises from its irrigation. It is situated between two rocks, gently sloping to the sea on the south, from which it is partially divided by some picturesque hills. The bottom of the vale is planted entirely with strawberries, which supply the island; its uplands are shaded by orange-trees, lemons, and the carubi-tree; the latter a most common production of Malta. Under their shade, and by the side of a small

rivulet, in which we cooled our wine, we partook of our provisions. As it was Sunday, there were many little parties of Maltese assembled ; for, to them, this spot appears the most beautiful that can be imagined. But is it possible to recall in these scenes the bowers of Calypso ? Whatever may be the fertility of Gozzo, or the mildness of her climate, it could not be here.

“ Τλη δε σπεος αμφιπεφυκει τηλεθουσα
Κληθητητ’ αιγειρος τε και ευωδης κυπαρισσος.”

Odyssey, lib. v. 63.

Where now are these shades ? where the fountains with “ υδατι λευκω ? ” No ! I do not think these islands can claim much interest from the ancients ; and I have not, therefore, noticed some mutilated Torsos, which, in Citta Vecchia, &c. are called Juno, Hercules, and all the members of the Pantheon. Nor are the modern females of Malta like the nymphs of Calypso : their beauty is rather Moorish than Grecian : as for their morals, they are indebted much to the education that was given them by the Bachelors of St. John ; and their dress is the same as in many parts of Sicily. On leaving their homes they put on a black petticoat and man-

tilla ; in the streets, therefore, we see no gaudy variety of costume. The Maltese men resemble much, in figure, the Neapolitans, and the resemblance continues to their minds : they have all the military qualifications of body, but not of soul ; and, like all cowards, are more to be governed by foul measures than fair. In their mode of life nothing can equal their independence. A Maltese who possesses a boat requires no other home : here he eats and sleeps, and this always at the time he has nothing else to do. Many who do not possess boats stretch themselves in some shady portico ; nor am I surprised that they prefer, in a Maltese night, the open atmosphere to a hovel crowded by animals ; for the streets of Valletta, during the day, are full of goats and sheep, which retire at night to herd with their owners. These goats are, indeed, valuable possessions ; they supply all the milk which is necessary, and of a quality not inferior to cow's-milk. Maltese meat is the best I ever tasted out of England, and bears a higher price than that which is imported : their bread, however, has a musty taste, owing to the corn having been kept so long in magazines. Though the oranges of Malta are famous through-

out the world, yet they are so rare, that the principal part of those consumed in the island, as well as those exported, are brought from Sicily ; which are, indeed, equally as good. The fruit, however, of Malta is delicious : the only thing in such a clime to be dreaded is too much warmth. In the vallies the fig-trees are remarkably fine. They have an excellent botanical garden, with an endowment for a lecturer ; and in this many of the oriental fruits are cultivated : I tasted some, natives of Japan, much resembling a juicy plum, which possess a coolness most luxuriant in a hot climate.

Though, as I before said, Malta is a place absorbed in commerce, yet I never was in a spot where the calculation of money was so complicated, or so difficult to be understood : this arises from there being two ways of calculating, the English and the Maltese. The Sicilian piastre is called by the one five shillings, by the other a dollar. The first divide it into shillings and pence ; the latter into scudi, of which two and a half are equal to a dollar, and into tarini, of which twelve make a scudo. A shilling consists of six tarini. It will be observed, that the Maltese make use of the Sicilian terms, scudo

and tarino, but apply them to coins of far inferior value. The four tarini piece of Malta is perhaps the basest coin in Europe, in proportion to the value it bears. “Non æs sed fides,” the reverse informs you; and its origin is a memorial of the activity of the knights for the public welfare, and the reliance of the people. Though the finances had been exhausted by wanderings and sieges, yet La Vallette, rather than delay the fortifications of Mount Sceberras, ordered these coins to be issued, appealing to the confidence of the people. This confidence, I have no doubt, was not abused, since, at present, none of these coins bearing so late a date are existing; but it was a bad precedent; and Lascaris, when grand-master, seems to have availed himself of it, as all now in circulation bear his name.

The grand-masters certainly employed their finances for the public good, and the works of the island form the annals of its rulers. Senglea reminds us of Claude de la Sangle, Valletta of La Vallette, Cottonera of de Cottener, Fort Manuel, of Manuel de Villhena. The memory of their former country has been the origin of other appellations; the forts of St. Angelo and of St. Elmo are namesakes of well-known cha-

teaux in Rhodes. These feelings of affectionate remembrance are common to every nation; even the poet has happily seized the idea, when he gives to Helenus, on the distant shores of Epirus,

———— “ parvam Trojam, simulataque magnis
Pergama, et arentem Xanthi cognomine rivum.”

CHAPTER V.

PLAGUE AT MALTA, 1813.

Ἐν δ' ὁ πυρφόρος θεὸς
 Σκήψας ἐλαύνει Λοιμὸς ἔχθισος πόλιν
 μελας
 Δ' αἰδῆς σεναγμοῖς καὶ γοοῖς πληθίζεται.

Sophocles.

A MELANCHOLY information was conveyed to us on our arrival at Malta, that a country vessel, trading from the Barbary coast, had been attacked by the plague, and two men had died: on its arrival in the port, the rigging and goods were burned, and the men placed in strict quarantine. Notwithstanding that the plague had not extended its effects to the island and port, great fears were entertained that the consuls on foreign stations would insist on a long quarantine from Maltese vessels; though, probably, if there is a port where the strictest precautions are preserved against this calamity, it is Malta.

The dreadful visitation of 1813 is not yet nor ever will be obliterated from their memory. The inhabitants think and speak of it with horror; and curiosity, as well as the fortunate procurement of the official papers relating to that time, induced me to make some notes relative to that terrible event.

A vessel, in the spring of 1813, left Alexandria, laden with hides and flax; and when, on the arrival, the captain and one of the seamen died under suspicious circumstances, Mr. Green, the head of the military medical department, and Mr. Iliff, apothecary of the forces, having visited the vessel, April 6th, strongly insisted on burning the ship and cargo, and putting in practice the preventive measures afterwards resorted to. Unluckily, the commissioner, Sir H. Oakes, was at that time in bad health, had already solicited his recall, and these effective measures, being left to deputies, were not fully performed. Smuggling was certainly carried on with the suspicious vessel; and it is a fact worthy of notice, that the plague first made its appearance in the house of a shoemaker, resident Strado San Paolo, 227, which seems to argue, that this horrid calamity was introduced through the hides from Alex-

andria. On May 5th, government first issued a proclamation, declaring, that "symptoms strongly indicative of the plague had appeared" in three persons of the name of Borg, and recommending the following precautions: "That an embargo be laid on all shipping in the port during the present state of suspense and anxiety: That, in the view of more effectually securing the health of the community until it can be ascertained whether the malady apprehended does really exist, the courts of judicature, the theatre, and other places of public resort, be shut: That the various quarters of the city, including all the towns within the fortifications, be placed under the immediate inspection of medical persons, who shall report their remarks for the benefit of the Board of Health." There was, however, hitherto no suspicion, except in the family of Salvadore Borg: the Maltese remained incredulous of their danger. On the 7th a few other cases were slightly alluded to; and an Italian notice, ordering all dogs and cats to be confined within doors, and prohibiting mendicants and itinerant vendors, seem to show there were suspicions which they dreaded to utter. Mr. Green, however, despising this cowardly irresolution in the native physicians,

on the very same day directed certain recommendations to be issued among the English, who showed themselves more willing to respect them.

“ 1st, That one individual only, from each healthy and unsuspected family, be appointed to go to market, and to avoid contact with others as much as possible. 2nd, That the number and names of each family be written and affixed to the outer door, and the members composing the same to show themselves when required so to do, as this measure will lead to the earliest detection of the disease. 3rd, That no animal food or vegetables should be received at market, unless in a vessel with water in it, mixed with salt or vinegar. 4th, That all excesses and indulgences tending to debilitate the body or mind should be avoided, and the greatest attention paid to personal cleanliness. 5th, The introduction of papers and parcels to be avoided; but, if introduced, to be fumigated. 6th, If an individual feels himself indisposed, to report the same without delay. 7th, The symptoms by which to detect the disease: 1st stage, Debility, sickness at stomach, shivering, followed by great heat and thirst, violent pains in the head, with giddiness and delirium: 2nd stage, Dark-co-

loured spots, and sometimes boils in different parts of the body, with swellings at or below the groins, in the armpits, neck, or side of the face, and not unfrequently small foul sores at the extremities. These last are the most certain symptoms of plague. The medicines recommended are, an emetic of 15 or 20 grains of ipecacuanha for an adult; 10 for a child: purgative, 5 grains of calomel, 10 of jalop, for an adult; the half for a child; and, after its operation, a sudorific; a table-spoonful of the spiritus mindereri every two hours in a weak liquid. Lemonade is recommended as a drink in the 1st stage, and shaving the head, and applying cloths moistened in vinegar and water, as well as to the whole body.

Signed by the Committee and
RALPH GREEN, May 7th.

The English inhabitants listened with gratitude to these instructions; and the consequence was, there was not one instance of death among them from the commencement to the close. The Maltese still seemed blind to their danger; they hated restriction, and were too much misled by the Italian notices. In these notices, from the 8th to the 12th, the malady is termed

“una febbre pestilenziale contagiosa;” and they assert the accounts favourable, though the father and son of Salvatore Borg had died, and he himself expired on the 13th. But the orders daily issued defied deception, except to the most blind. Purification, on the most extensive scale, of all apartments, furniture, and linen, is enjoined in an article of the 10th; white-washing, the removal of pictures, ornaments, all that might harbour dirt, the precautions to be taken in receiving in goods, provisions, &c. &c. the recommendation of plain diet; these were, one would imagine, too awful warnings to be disregarded. Boys were now forbid to go out, schools were shut, and the most earnest solicitations to all persons to inform wherever malady might exist.

The plague quickly burst forth in all its horrors; all who had communication with those first attacked, were more immediately affected; it spread in all parts of Valletta; its footsteps could not be traced, much less could they be stopped; and on May 19th, when the first bulletin was issued, I consider the commencement of those horrid days. On that day, government commanded, under pain of punishment, what had before been only recom-

mended, the affixing of the names of each family on the door of their house, and their appearance, when called for. It also repeated the precautions with respect to cleanliness and the reception of provisions. As the opposite side of the water had not yet been attacked, no boats were allowed to ply after eight o'clock at night: ought they, I might add, to have plied at all? The government must appear, in these details, very remiss and very dilatory in their precautions; but, alas! they were placed in a very arduous situation; besides the incredulity of the Maltese, they had to struggle with the malignity of many French emissaries, who "ascribed to unworthy motives these measures of precaution;" and they possessed at the time a very inadequate force of military to support them.

On May 24th a vigorous proclamation appeared, offering one thousand scudi reward for the apprehension of all who had thus inflamed the public mind, and certifying, at the same time, "that no doubt existed, or does now exist in the minds of the physicians, that those individuals notified in all the bulletins published since the 7th instant as having died of the plague, did die of a real and malignant *plague*."

And, on the close of the month of May, the deaths were 110.

The appearance of Valletta, at this period, I leave to the imagination: the streets silent and deserted; persons passing each other without salutation, only anxious to avoid contact; no business, no intercourse of friendship. Day might pass after day and no amelioration to be expected; the lovely weather of summer was passing,—but who could dare issue out to enjoy it? and, yet, was there security at home? The secret enemy might have already crept in; at night the inhabitant could hardly trust to the morrow; and if infection was not yet at work, how long might they escape? when could they be free from fear? no precaution can be termed certain, no medicine efficient. The plague has been compared to many of the most mortal maladies: it far exceeds them all. Death is not the only result, it is death without assistance, without consolation, without decency. Earthquakes are, in my opinion, less awful visitations: the evil passes sudden, the victim flies to his family or his God, and he has not the horrors of delay to combat with. The silence, the calm unaltered weather which may exist during the plague, heighten its terrors. Quietly

and invisibly it breaks through barriers, and defies limitation. With such a scene constantly before one's eyes, there seems little more misery left when the attack falls; but then to be torn brutally from one's bed, regarded with dread, and perhaps thrown, still alive, into one's grave—so closes the human scene. We may hope the sketch is exaggerated with respect to Malta: English humanity assures us it is; but even here they were obliged to employ criminals to convey the patients to the lazarettos, and the dead to the grave.

The deaths had hitherto been not more than 10 per diem: they now rapidly increased to 30, to 40, and, at the close of the month, to 50 per diem. Fort Manuel was no longer set apart for the suspected, the infected were sent there also; lazarettos were formed in different districts; and, though many persons had fled, at the first attack, into the country, the scourge followed them there: in the middle of the month, Zeitun, Zurico, and many considerable casals, were affected.

Some restraint to such rapid communication was necessary; and, June 24th, it was declared, that no persons could pass from Valletta to the country, or to the opposite side of the port, or

vice versâ, without tickets issued from the palace; and, on the 29th, an extraordinary council of health was established, the commissioner and all the principal officers of the island assembling every morning at half past ten: so ended the month of June. The dead amounted to more than sevenfold the preceding month, being 802: 30 infected persons had recovered.

July brought the crisis of these horrors. A corps, called the civic guards, was ordered, on the 3rd instant, to be organized, to enforce the orders issued; military were now the only persons seen patrolling the streets; houses were guarded by centinels wherever suspicion occurred; the number of daily deaths increased to between 60 and 70. On reference, I find the greatest number happened July 16th, when 67 died. Great fears were entertained for the army: Roll's regiment was affected, but it had attacked as yet only native soldiers. On July 13th, all communication of any kind was forbid between Valletta and the country; and provisions for the supply of the former were to be deposited at the new gate on the Marino. Nay, even in the city, all intercourse ceased during the day. After July 17th, "no person could go abroad, even in the limits of

his respective district, unless between the hours of six and ten in the morning; each of which hours would be notified by sounding the great bell of St. John's church: that even then only one person of each family should go to the market of his respective district; and, at the expiration of the time, the shops should be shut, and the vendors and inhabitants retire to their houses until the following morning." The number of deaths this month were double the preceding, amounting to 1595. It was gratifying, however, to find that 180 had been recovered; and this important notice was added, "that none of the attendants in the military pest hospital had been attacked by the disease. Friction with oil, and fumigation with vitriolic acid and nitre, had been constantly used as preservatives." On the 16th of the following month Dr. Gravagna, however, died, and many surgeons also perished.

It may well be imagined, that after the mortality of the preceding month, despair was almost at its height; the malady, instead of being arrested by any of the orders (rigid as they were), had increased. On the 1st of August, extremities were resorted to. Death was declared the punishment of all "who should

change their residence without permission; who should enter infected houses without permission; who did not instantly reveal the sickness of himself or family, or of others, when known to him; who embezzled, or wilfully did not prevent the embezzlement, of any article from an infected or suspected place, though the article was not susceptible of infection." Capital punishment was denounced against all "who, being aware of the infraction of these articles, did not inform;" and against persons employed by government, "who should rob or permit robbery in any house, though not suspected or infected." These severe orders were rigidly acted up to; for I find on the 17th of August Antonio Borg *was shot* for concealing his illness of the plague. On August 2nd, the proclamation of July 17th, authorising persons to go to market between the hours of six and ten, was annulled; all persons were confined to their houses, under pain of death, and their victuals were deposited at their doors. The civic guards, nearly worn out by fatigue, issued an invitation, through Rivarola, their colonel, to form an association, in each street, of the inhabitants, under the name of urban guard. So great was the fear, "that these volunteers were not re-

quired to quit their street, or even their houses, as the service required of them might be performed from their windows and doors." On the 9th, further instructions to these volunteers were issued. Those only were allowed to "stand before their doors, whose house had no windows; that they were only to stand there from four in the morning to ten at night; that they must not pass the foot pavement, or, where there was none, three palms from the wall; they were to answer for the cleanliness of the street; to question all persons who passed; to superintend the introduction of provisions; to cause all doors and windows to be shut when carts of dead, or suspected goods, passed by; and, in case of a strong wind, this was to be done when the streets were cleaned." These volunteers were also to give notice when priests, physicians, &c. were wanted. As cotton is known to harbour infection in a great degree, the whole of that year's produce was denounced, on August 25th, as infected, and all who gathered it punished by death.

The progress of the disease seemed now at least to be arrested. If, at the beginning of the month, the deaths were above 50 per diem, they gradually fell to 40, and, at the end, were

20 or 30 per diem; the fresh sick became much less in proportion to the deaths; and I perceive, though the disease had, in a few cases, crept into Vittoriosa, the country was far more affected than the city. The decrease of the malady was declared, however, “not to be so great as might reasonably be expected from the strong precautionary and restrictive measures adopted.” And, in a proclamation of the 27th instant, the sale of all fruit and vegetables at the barriers was forbid; thus cutting off a communication even in *this* from the country. The restriction was extended on the 28th to Gozzo, and the following orders issued with respect to other provisions: “That all meat, eggs, &c. be left at the door in vessels of water, placed there by the purchaser for that purpose; that rabbits should be sold without their skins, and pigeons without their feathers; that oil and wine should be poured into vases placed outside, without covers, and the vendor should never touch the vases; that in these cases the vases should be left at least half an hour before taken in; coffee and sugar should be received on plates, and the purchaser to be careful no paper, string, or other things capable of infection be conveyed with it, and if

found, to be removed out by pincers. Bread to be received in baskets, and by no means from hand to hand; and when taken in, to be passed first over the fire before eaten. All money to be passed through vinegar. And, finally, all those who were forced to go out, were to rub themselves with oil, as the most secure preservative against infection." At the close of August the deaths were found to be 1042, full 500 less than the preceding month; while, of these, only 275 took place in Valletta. Casul Zebbug alone had nearly as many; the number there being 271. I could find no return of the cured in this month.

Somes hopes began now, on the commencement of September, to be encouraged. On the 10th instant, a cordon of troops was placed round the strongly infected casals, which it was death to pass. After September 21st, the daily deaths never exceeded 20; and, at the close of September, the total of deaths was 674; of which 47 were in Valletta, 232 in Zebbug. The period of Sir H. Oake's labours was now drawing to a close. Extreme ill health made him, at the commencement of the year, request to resign; but, in these days of danger, his duty would not allow him to retreat from his

post till he could personally entrust it into the hands of his successor. On October 4th, he, “ for the last time, addressed the inhabitants of those islands in an official capacity, expressing his congratulations for the declension of the dreadful malady with which it had pleased God to afflict them, and that to a degree which justified the hope of its speedy extinction.” The following day, 5th instant, Sir Thomas Maitland, who had been sent out from England at this momentous epoch, from his known abilities, entered office. It was a period, indeed, which required the greatest prudence of administration; he came to a country harassed by disease, and to finances dreadfully reduced. I have heard the expenses of government, during the virulent season of the plague, estimated at £1000 per diem. Extra salaries were granted to all persons in office; and the regular price of labour was six piastres a day. To meet, in some measure, the expenditure, a proclamation for a loan was issued, October 16th, of one per cent per mensem, and for the duration of one year. On the 19th, exportation of goods was permitted to some merchants, at the discretion of the health-office; but they could only be shipped to the East. Symptoms of amendment were,

indeed, daily increasing; after October 9th, the number of daily deaths never exceeded 10, and these were generally confined to Casal Curmi. On the two last days of October, 20 fresh cases occurred; and, from the 1st to 31st instant inclusive, the amount of deaths was not more than 214, one third of the preceding month. On the 23rd of this month, the duties of the medical department had been explicitly stated; and it was declared, that all persons who had taken an active part in these times of danger would be entitled to favourable consideration.

From November we may date the commencement of a gradual convalescence through the island; the regular bulletins of deaths ceased, and they were only announced to official persons by notes from the aides-de-camp. On November 13th, Sir T. Maitland declared, “that no case of plague had occurred for a fortnight in Valletta; and that it was now necessary to adopt the measures requisite antecedent to pratique being granted.” In consequence of which, on the following Wednesday, 17th instant, a general purification took place; “the windows and doors were kept constantly open, the goods, &c. washed and purified, all the

lower apartments white-washed; and any disregard of these orders was punished on that house with 40 days' quarantine longer than the rest." Measures were taken for the opening of such houses as had been deserted and sealed up by persons retiring into the country, or conveyed to the lazaretto. "All the calesses, or public carriages, were to undergo a fifteen days' quarantine, being ranged out on the parade in Floriana, and to be all new lined; and an earnest exhortation, accompanied by free pardon, was held out to all who came forward to own concealment of goods, or to any who had cured themselves, or by the aid of quacks." As it was expedient that pratique should be granted through the island as much as possible at the same time, this purification was extended to the other parts, with the exception of Curmi, Birchircara, and Rabbato; but, at the same time, it was strictly declared, that during such purification there would be no relaxation from the order of confinement; in fact, the opening of the stores, &c., for the time increased the public danger. The quantity of these infected depôts, indeed, might create some alarm; and, as it was necessary that they must be removed to the lazaretto,

government could only afford to bear a portion of the enormous expense ; and it was decreed, November 27th, that the owner must bear two-thirds, and government one, of this expense ; and all depôts would be burnt that were not thus expurgated by the proprietors.

These measures were pursued till December 4th. On this day the inhabitants (how joyfully may be conceived) entered their clean quarantine. To one spot, however, these rejoicings did not extend : the 24th of the last month, some violent cases of plague appeared at Casal Curmi ; four guards of health, and a woman and four children, were taken ill. Though the malady had lingered greatly in this Casal, yet, on the previous days, the sick never exceeded more than one or two. The melancholy cases were known to proceed from two reasons : “ from the audacity to steal infected goods, and the folly to conceal them.” The very day, therefore, that Valletta entered her clean quarantine, Casal Curmi was placed under martial law. Some slight fears were entertained in Valletta, December 7th, from a case of plague taking place at St. George’s ; and it being ascertained that many crews had landed in St. George’s bay, all communication between the

shipping and the shore ceased for ten days. The alarm proved groundless, but again revived, December 24th, from an illness in Valletta, which was proved not to be plague. The government, at the same time, declared, they should grossly deceive the people if they did not state, that for many months to come a considerable risk of the recurrence was to be apprehended and guarded against. The following precautions would therefore be followed till the fall of the following year, whenever any case or suspicion of contagion might take place :
 “ Proclamation would be made by the police-officers, attended by a trumpeter or bugles, in various streets, in order that all persons might retire immediately to their respective houses. On the case being investigated, the district in which it occurred being shut up, and the parties conveyed to the lazaretto, free communication in the other districts would be permitted.”

On the commencement of 1814, January 1st, Valletta and Floriana, together with the shipping, reopened communication after a confinement of near six months, ever since July 13th ; and, January 7th, the courts opened, after being closed eight months.

The clean quarantine of Valletta expired

January 14th, without any case of suspicion; but in the country it was extended 15 days longer, on account of a sudden death at Casal Nasciar, which, though apparently not from plague, required some circumspection. Free pratique through the whole island, with the exception of Casal Curmi, was declared, January 27th. Still fearful that many infected articles might have been concealed by persons antecedent to their deaths, and be afterwards discovered, government held out a reward to all who should, on such discovery, inform, and severe punishment to those who did not. The more dreaded anathemas of excommunication were denounced on those offenders by Ferdinando Mattei, bishop of Malta. These precautions seemed effectual; only two persons were detected breaking the quarantine laws, and they received, March 26th, the King's pardon. March 1st, the plague was declared extinct, and the extra salaries ceased. And June 10th, the following official statement appeared, which is the last relating to the plague. "No case of plague had appeared since January 27th in the island, the day of free pratique. There was no case of plague in the Lazaretto since January 31st. In the lazaretto of Curmi there had been

no case of ascertained plague since March 7th. On April 18th, a case of suspicion occurred, but the symptoms did not spread among the rest of the family. That in Gozzo, the first case of plague happened the beginning of March; since which time, the deaths did not amount to 100. That in the whole island (with the exception of the infected casal), no case of plague had appeared for 54 days, except in a medical practitioner, who died 35 days ago. That in the infected casal a solitary case appeared 24 days ago: except this, no case had appeared for 47 days."

Let us now look back at the devastations that this calamity had created. Many streets were depopulated; whole families had ceased to exist. It may be remembered some persons of the name of Borg had been the first attacked. I reckoned, down to October, no less than 156 of this name dead. One habitation in the Strada Pozza had originally 52 inhabitants; by June 17th all but one little girl were dead. The total mortality amounted to at least 6000; for many had died of whom no returns were made. The English residents and the army in general were free from this disorder. This may be attributed partly to their taking more pre-

cautions, partly to their not living in such crowded houses. It is curious, however, to observe, that the malady did not seem to depend much on the atmosphere; for it was much more violent in Valletta, which is airy and regularly built, while it hardly appeared in the towns on the other side the port, which are dirty and confined. In fact, I think, from the foregoing accounts, it may be perceived that the plague, though highly contagious, is not epidemical: a truth which is becoming annually more evident.

Of things susceptible of contagion, those most highly so are cotton, linen, paper, wool. Metals, wood, and eatables, generally are supposed more exempt. For the medicine and regimen all accounts differ. In the proclamation of May 7, purging and bleeding is recommended. Reidesel says, *Une personne saignée ou purgée n'échappe jamais.*—Lemonade is recommended in the same proclamation; and Reidesel attributes the prevalence of the disease in Turkey to the non use of acids (p. 370),—while Sonnini (vol. ii. 344), declares all fruit mortal, recommends meat and salt fish: the proclamation of the 12th of May seems to insinuate the contrary. Such is the

mass of contradictions. There is one curious remark of Reidesdel, which a physician of Malta admitted from observation to be true, that this disease runs in blood, that some families are more susceptible than others, and that married people often escaped catching it from one another; but it was always communicated from children to parents, and parents to children. After all, the malady of Malta committed ravages slight, in comparison to those of countries less orderly and cautious. In the year 1778, at Constantinople, one day carried off 2000*, one third of the whole mortality of Malta!! The plague of Messina was nearly that of extermination.

An anecdote was related to me at Malta by two or three persons, which is one of the most affecting records of humanity, amidst a time of brutality, and particularly from a stranger to their country and an enemy to their religion. It was necessary, during the period of the plague, in order to procure persons who would run the risk of attending and removing the sick, or of burying the dead, not only to employ criminals sent for that purpose from Si-

* Evelyn relates near 10,000 persons perished weekly of the plague, Sept. 1665.

cily, but especially to seek for those who, professing Mahometanism, are as predestinarians divested of the fears of contagion. Among fourteen Turks thus employed, there was one particularly noted for his benevolence and attention to the sick, so opposite to the brutality of his comrades: he would carry them gently from their dwellings to the Lazaretto, supply them with medicines, and would take care that decency was preserved even to their burial. In one of the houses attacked by the plague, one child alone survived; he carried this infant to the hut in which himself and thirteen comrades lived. The child caught the plague, but through the care of this old Turk recovered, and at the extirpation of the disorder, the protégé and the protector were the only two remaining; the rest all died. The pay, during the plague, of daily labour, was six dollars: five of these the old Turk gave to the priest to be distributed among the poor, reserving but one for his own subsistence. When some period had elapsed after the plague a gentleman of Malta told me he saw this Turk *begging* in the streets: having no small money in his pocket, he gave him a dollar, telling him to return him the half,

when he next saw him : a few days after the old man brought him the fifteen tari, with many blessings, and seemed surprised they were not received. What was the end of this man? Forgotten by the government to which he had been a faithful servant, and neglected by the people to whom he had been a generous benefactor, he died in a miserable cellar, of starvation.

May 4. I this day heard it positively asserted, that the plague originated from some flax, not hides, being stole from the ship in quarantine by the guardian, and sold to Borg. Near the palace Bonaparte, which was made the hospital of suspicion, I saw many of the graves that were opened for those that should die of the plague : they happily were never filled. Close by, lay rotting the bier in which the unfortunates were carried ; a melancholy relic. Over those houses which were infected, the mark affixed by government may still be traced ; it is a white circle with a black rim.

From such melancholy details, it is however now time to turn, and I am again recalled to my favourite topic of the knighthood of St. John, by a report very prevalent in Malta,

that it is the intention of the sovereigns of Europe to revive the order, and fix them in some of the islands of the Levant*. The utility of such restoration may well be called in question. Much, very much may be allowed, for the interest which is excited by a gallant chivalrous order; for the gratitude resulting from the protection they afforded to early Christian commerce; for the attachment in most countries connected with a name, so ancient and so illustrious: but the talisman on which that interest and attachment rested is broke; like many of the ancient governments, the chain once severed cannot be re-joined. Even supposing such feelings undiminished, either by their behaviour, in cowardly ceding the island, or by the lapse of time, where now are the estates, without which they cannot exist? Will they be restored also? Where are the remnants of their order? Such are the obstacles that impede the revival; what may be the objects for which they should be

* I have experienced much interest in visiting Malta, but there is a distinction to be preserved between the interest of the feelings in a romantic chivalrous history, and the interest of reason in a well constituted and useful state.

restored? To check piracy? that which they at the most only professed to combat, the present possessors of their island have annihilated: if they afforded some protection against the corsairs, owing to us there are no corsairs to dread. Is it to guard against Turkish slavery, or to promote the glory of the *Cross*? The world has now become too civilised to find much annoyance from the first, and too wise to be blinded by the second. “The age of chivalry is past,” with its evil though fascinating charms; and over the cooler minds of the present day, the sarcasms of Voltaire, or natural reasoning of Gibbon, would hold more sway than the enthusiasm of Peter the Hermit or chivalrous virtues of Cœur de Lion. Utility must ever be out of the question. Allowing it to be re-established, as a mark of ancient honour, unless it be at Malta, on the heights of Scerberras, in the forts of St. Angelo and St. Elmo, amidst the scenes of their triumphs in 1565—what interest can be excited? and even here the annals are not those of *chevaliers sans tache* and *sans peur*. Allowing it to be re-established as an order inoffensive and virtuous; we are then driven to review their in-

dividual conduct, or their ridiculous institutions. The first bears no comment*. Among the latter the following are the most amusing.

No knight was to be admitted that had not four quarterings; those of the tongue of Germany must possess sixteen. Each of the tongues had an albergo, the head of which was their caterer, and called *piliere*; if he supplied them with bad dinners, no complaint was allowed but to the *piliere*, and if he pronounced the complaint vexatious, the complainant was sentenced to the punishment of *septaine*, or a fast of seven days, with daily humiliation in St. John's, and bread and water on Wednesday and Friday. "No Knight was, on any account, to enter the *kitchen*." I suppose hunger used to drive them there. Chastity, it is supposed, was most strictly enforced; but according to the statute, it is only when an offence was in public, that it was punished by public degradation: if in private, it was expiated by mere private penitence. Such was the order that lasted from 1104 to 1798.

I will just add the method of electing the Grand Master, and the duties of the several tongues,

* The degradation of the Knights from their original character has been the theme of every traveller.

as they are curious. Each of the seven tongues, (when that of England was abolished) chose three electors, and three were chosen to represent England. These twenty-four retired to a council, where they selected out of their number three persons, these three chose one other, these four another, and so on to sixteen, who at last elected the Grand Master. The following are the tongues, and their duties.

8 Tongues.	Titles.	Duties.
Provence,	Grand Commandant,	overlooked the treasury and arsenal.
Auvergne,	Marshal,	commanded the forces.
France,	Hospitalier,	overlooked the hospitals and sick.
Italy,	Admiral,	commanded the gallies.
Arragon,	Grand Conservator,	(his duties I have forgot.)
England,	Turcopolier,	commanded cavalry and marine guards.
Germany,	Grand Bailli,	overlooked the fortifications.
Portugal,	Grand Chancellor,	possessed the great seal.

CHAPTER VI.

MALTA TO SYRACUSE.

“ Urbem Syracusas maximam esse Græcarum urbium pulcherrimamque omnium sæpe audistis.” *Cicero in Verrem. lib.4.*

DAY after day passed away, and we could find no vessel to convey us back to Sicily: Malta, which appeared at first so interesting, became at last like a prison; we, like Ulysses, forgot the temptations of Calypso's isle, when detained by necessity, and sympathised with Reidesel in his declaration, “j'éprouvai une inquietude si désagréable, que j'en conçus le plus violent desir de repartir au plutôt.” At last we found a brig (“the Isabella,”) which was on the departure for Syracuse. An English clergyman, Mr. G—v—r, joined our party; and, after having provided all the comforts we could think of, to pass the time of our quarantine, we hoisted sail the evening of May 27, and passed under the batteries of St. Elmo, exactly as the

evening gun announced the sunset, the hour at which Malta always looks beautiful ; and, as it was our farewell, to us she seemed more so than ever. A brisk south-west wind soon carried us out of sight of land, and a heavy swell made us retreat to our cabin.

May 28.—When we came on deck, we were close to Cape Passaro. The captain, who had been up on account of the wind all night, informed us, about one in the morning, Etna had burst out in a sudden blaze, and we now beheld all the eastern side, a few miles from the top, enveloped in smoke. Its snowy head rose above perfectly clear, in a cloudless sky. Though the cape of Passaro is low and sandy, yet some sloping hills in the distance, prettily undulated, and well wooded, were more agreeable than Sicilian landscapes in general. Our captain had never visited this coast before, and I actually think would not have discovered the harbour of Syracuse if we had not assisted him with our maps ; and the description we had acquired from history was of no small use in ascertaining the entrance. About one P. M. we passed the miserable town which now bears that famous name. I was not disappointed, because

travellers all warn us of its present state ; but some wretched walls, of a few feet high, were strikingly ridiculous, after the stupendous fortifications of Malta. Three hours passed away before the officers of health troubled themselves about our arrival ; we were then conveyed to be looked at through a wooden paling, and received the sentence of twenty-one days quarantine. Having no merchandise on board, saved us a week. Such was the terror those two cases of plague, at Malta, had spread, and which the advantages accruing to Government, from quarantine fees, caused them to exaggerate. On a small quay under the walls of the town are some wooden sheds, not unlike cow-houses, which are the only Lazarettos in the place ; we returned therefore to our vessel, erected an awning, and resigned ourselves to the contemplation of the great Syracuse.

It is hardly possible entirely to avoid a little rhapsody when travellers visit spots of ancient renown ; but I never found it so universal as in those who have described Syracuse. And never is it more excusable ; for, dissatisfied with its actual, who can refrain remembering its former state ? We are now anchored in a vast basin ; the great port being nearly circular, and more

than six miles in circumference*, and the shores stretch round like a vast panorama. To our north-east, we are inclosed from the sea by the Peninsula of Ortigia. Here stands modern Syracuse. The dwellings that rise above the walls are ruinous in the extreme. There are no quays, and apparently no commerce. The narrow neck which connects it with the land is bisected by two wet ditches with draw-bridges. By planting our telescope at these, we behold every one that passes in or out of the town. Immediately without the town, and on the shore, about 200 yards from the ship, I see a fountain which rolls along a stone trough, where the washerwomen of Syracuse assemble daily. Is this the divine Arethusa—the waters which Brydone declares rise suddenly to the size of a river? I own that I hope I am deceived. Behind extends a long range of high land, which I conceive to be the situation of Epipolis, while the shore was that of Acradina. The former was, from its commanding situation and strong fortifications, of great consequence in an attack: the revolters against Dionysius instantly seized upon it, but as it is

* Brydone says the port is six miles round, Reidesel six miles broad: “medio tutissimus ibis.”

separated from approaches on the south by the intervention of Acradina, Hamilcar, who marched from the Anapus, encamped in the last. In raising my telescope, I have just discovered the seats of the theatre on the side of the hill, cut out of the rock ; while the steep precipices, a little to the right, clearly indicate the Latomiæ. The high ground now bends from the shore, more to the westward, and is succeeded by a most charming plain of many miles in dimensions ; it is covered with wood of a darker green than olives, and scattered as in a park. This sweeps round a quarter of the bay until a gentle bank on the south, and a small bridge, which I see at its foot, marks the route of the Anapus. Two colossal pillars are very visible on the bank, the remains of the Temple of Jupiter. The transactions that have passed on these spots are celebrated. In this temple the Athenians retired when baffled in every assault. Near this temple, Dion encamped the night before he entered Syracuse as the vindicator of liberty, and then marched from the Anapus, over that fertile plain, crowned with flowers, and followed with applause. These two were the most *memorable* events for Syracuse*.

* Because most connected with its liberty.

The hills which bound the prospect are gently undulated and covered with wood. The shore to the south-east becomes lower and terminates in a point, which forms the entrance of the port opposite Ortigia. It was called Plemmyrium. Hamilcar built a fort here, but of this no vestiges remain. The white surf that (from experience I may say always, when the wind comes from the sea) rises over these rocks, proves the correctness of the ancient epithet of *undosum*.

Such is the situation of the former capital of Sicily, for so in fact it was. For richness of soil, capability of defence, and spacious harbour, I cannot recollect any place that can be compared with it. The island of modern Syracuse may be made impregnable, and the high ground of Epipolis shelters it from the north. It so perfectly commands the town, that, in the present system of warfare, its vicinity has become more dangerous, especially as the safety of the place is not of equal value to the expense required for fortifying the Epipolis.

Another of our amusements, during this period of quarantine, is watching Mount Etna, which is very visible except in a north north-west wind. All the inhabitants of Syracuse are talking of the eruption that broke out the 27th ultimo,

the very night it so surprised our captain in the canal of Malta. The lava is very visible at night, and is as bright as ever I saw it on Vesuvius from Naples: the one was six miles distant, the other is forty. I hear also, that the Scout sloop of war, in returning from Smyrna, had her deck and sails covered with ashes, though some miles out at sea. It appears at this distance as if there were two craters formed: the upper discharges stones, as we can see clearly by the telescopes, and becomes more vivid at intervals; from the latter descends a bright unvaried stream towards the south-east. The nights when we saw it most clearly were June 9 and 13, and on the 11th, when the wind was favourable, we heard the discharges very distinctly. An eruption has not happened before since 1813. How anxious we all are to be released at this interesting moment may be well conceived, and we are the more apt to complain, since the quarantine, as far as any benefit to be expected from it, is a farce. All persons intermingle, whether on the point of receiving pratique or just arrived, and the guardians wink at every irregularity except that of shortening the period, which would abridge also their fees.

As an instance of this, I will state that every

evening during the last week we passed in company with Captain H—ns—n, a gentleman just arrived over-land from India, and who joined our party afterwards. He was confined in the Lazzaretto, as he was later from Malta than ourselves; but one of the merriest evenings I ever passed, was the one before we left quarantine, when, *tous ensemble*, we drank the health of old England in that miserable shed under the walls of Syracuse.

June 17.—To our unspeakable joy we obtained pratique, and took up our abode in a most comfortable inn belonging to Giuseppe Abbate; we were indeed in a humour to be delighted with every thing, and our first evening's walk under the guidance of our landlord enchanted me. We had been more than two months without seeing (at least to enjoy) a verdant spot, except some few in Malta, and three weeks we had been in little better than prison. We now were landed among scenes renowned for fertility, and at such a season

Nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbor,
Nunc frondent sylvæ, nunc est formosissimus annus.
Virgil.

After passing the innumerable ditches and

cannonless walls of the town, we came on that open space, where from the ship I had perceived two pillars: one of these I always conceived to be ancient, and I now find it was the custom-house; the opposite one is erected to the memory of a murderer! who being refused a small sum dashed out his father's brains, and after being *detained two years* in confinement, was sentenced to death. What traits of character! in the individual a horrid barbarity, in the government weakness, to defer a punishment, till it becomes inhumanity to execute; and is it not strange that the same monument which is usually dedicated to fame, here perpetuates infamy?

We wandered on through shady lanes and green fields of flax, which now cover the ancient quarter of Napoli (a name which with me always conveys the idea of beautiful), till we at last stood in the amphitheatre. It is not so perfect as many others we had seen, and in this luxuriant soil, the weeds wanton over the little that is left. It is, too, of course a Roman edifice, and did not, therefore, excite with us so much interest. We hence proceeded by a handsome aqueduct (the arch of which, that passes the road, forms a sweet vista over the plain),

and arrived at the theatre. This astonishing edifice is so enormous, that with all the artful assistance of the brazen mask, which they are said to have used, I conceive it impossible for the human voice to reach all parts distinctly: its seats and inscriptions are very perfect; its site commands a view which excited the greatest regret in Reidesel, that he could not design it, and of which I availed myself of an opportunity to procure a drawing at Malta. So charming is the scene, that I could hardly allow the little mill which stands in the middle to detract from its beauty. The noise of the falling water rather increases the effect. Just as I was leaving the theatre, I remarked a great superiority in comfort in it over the amphitheatre. Here spaces are left behind the seats for persons to pass round to any part of the edifice.

We now descended into the Latomia of Neapolis, called paradise, and indeed it appeared the place

“ Chos’n by the sov’reign planter when he fram’d
 “ All things to man’s delightful use.”

Milton.

Almond-trees, figs, and pomegranates cover

a little valley cut out of solid rock : on the precipices, which enclose it, the caper plant produces its delicate purple flower, and the nightingale has claimed this garden as her territory. We were all in raptures. At the farther extremity is the famous ear of Dionysius. Here again is fresh subject of surprise ; instead of a narrow and shallow opening which I expected, we found a spacious cavern. I cannot forgive any who venture a doubt of its purpose : its shape authorizes the conjecture fully ; and if the beauty of the spot renders it questionable, whether Dionysius would dedicate a “ Paradise ” to captivity, still might it not have been this same beauty, that animated Philoxenus, since he wrote in the Latomia his sweetest poem ? At present the Latomia is a retreat for some rope-makers, who work in the cool of the surrounding grottos. A similar busy scene occurs in entering the Peak cavern in Derbyshire. We looked down into other equally beautiful quarries, but the setting sun warned us of the necessity of returning, as the gates close at one o’clock, *i. e.* the first hour after sunset. Being the last day of the *Fête de Dieu*, we found squibs, &c. flying in all directions, and the processions as tedious and ridiculous as a Catholic could desire.

The following morning Captain H—ns—n joined our party, and we embarked to explore the windings of the Anapus, and search out the papyrus. This river winds through the plain, whose verdant fields I now found were flax : its fertility is deceitful, for on approach it breathes an unwholesome atmosphere. A few miles up we arrived at those reeds to which we are indebted for the works of genius and taste, which contribute so much to modern civilization. Their appearance does not betray the use they were applied to. The reed I suppose was flattened, and then prepared for writing. We next landed near the temple of Jupiter Olympius : two pillars are all that remain ; and I now took the precaution to see if Reidesel's assertion, that all Doric pillars have 21 flutes is true, but I could count only 16. Dionysius has been amazingly abused in the story of robbing the statue of Jupiter of a golden robe. A modern nation has done much the same, whenever they contrived to enter rich churches, &c. ; and though their argument is not so witty as that of Dionysius, still it is more of an argument, *viz.* that wealth should not be left useless. I look back on the tinsel robe of fair Rosalie, at Palermo, and wish Dionysius alive

again. On returning to Ortigia, we visited the fountain of Arethusa, which I now discover is situated within the walls.* Brydone's account of its being as large as a river had before created some doubts whether that in the bay could be the one. We found the waters of the nymph polluted by some dirty soldiers washing.

The temple of Minerva, now the cathedral, was disfigured by the gilt ornaments of the fête, and its noble pillars are now imbedded in the wall; thus let us leave it. In the evening we repeated our wanderings over the beautiful Neapolis. I proposed extending our walk to the Strada Sepolchrale, and though we had the curiosity and enthusiasm of Cicero, we had less success: Archimedes' tomb is no longer to be found. Hollow cells in the rock, which resemble, Captain H—ns—n says, the catacombs of Egypt, line a narrow street, but without mark or inscriptions. The sepulchre of Gelon, a tyrant and a warrior, fell under the sword of Hamilcar; but the course of nature obliterated the monument of the philosopher.

Now let us return for the last time to the

* My ignorance was a little unpardonable, I own; but I had an idea that the fountain was near the temple of Diana, and this I understood from the guide was outside Ortigia.

theatre. I had given up the invitation of viewing an excellent private museum in Syracuse for one more view of the lovely scene before me. I believe I might appeal to my companions, that we were all rather romantically disposed while we sat the last evening on the upper seats, talking over the events that had once happened around. It was a vision for the poet. At the doors of the very theatre in which we sat, Dionysius, in the pride of youth and conquest, first presented himself on his return from Gela. Perhaps it was from this spot also, certainly from some near it, that the beauty of fallen Syracuse melted the triumphant Marcellus into tears.* On yonder shore, in the same season as the present, Verres reclined amidst all the luxuries that a Roman could invent or Sicily supply, converting even the preparations of war into the parade of a festival.† Voluptuousness seems to have been the closing scene of Syracuse; yet when, after the lapse of years, the curtain is again drawn aside, and discovers Syracuse reduced to the little island of Ortigia, a remnant of ancient spirit, as Gibbon says, again burst forth; for twenty

* Livius, xxv. 25.

† Cicero, Act. 2. lib. v.



Engraved by A. J. Smith

Chateau de Cyrenne



days the citizens resisted all the efforts of the besieging Saracens ; and, but for bigotry, the issue might have been successful. This ray of former renown, faint though it may be, becomes interesting, for it is the last ; at the end of three centuries more, an historian declares its extinction. “ The ancient virtue of Syracuse expires in poverty and solitude.”

Note.—Fearful that those who have never visited Syracuse will scarcely credit the beauties of this view, I subjoin the authority of Reidesel and de Borch. “ J’ai passé avec la plus grande satisfaction deux jours entiers a l’examiner ; c’est un des coups d’œil les plus pittoresques que j’aie rencontrés en Sicile, et que je regrette le plus de n’avoir pu faire dessiner par un artiste habile et exact.” De Borch is still more rapturous. “ La vue se perd dans l’immensité de ce vaste théâtre, partout emillé de fleurs, et offrant de tous les côtés les plus beaux coups d’œil. Ce sont les Champs Elysées, c’est la vallée de Tempe, c’est le séjour le plus ravissant ; et si l’on ne voit point les bosquets d’Alcinous, l’œil n’en est que plus satisfait.”

CHAPTER VII.

SYRACUSE TO MOUNT ETNA.

“The kingdom of the two Sicilies offers certainly the fairest field for observation of this kind of any in the whole world: here are volcanoes existing in their full force; some in their decline, and others totally extinct.”—Hamilton, page 93.

June 19.—We departed from the great port of Syracuse in one of those quick sailing boats a speronara. We rapidly passed the town of Augusta; but in entering the bay of Catania found the wind against us, and a heavy sea running on the shore: all struggles were vain, and we were obliged to shelter our speronara among some rocks off the cape of St. Maria della Croce. After taking some refreshment, we made another attempt: the speronara lay within four points of the wind; but, from the clumsiness of its sail, was, in tacking, always driven to the leeward. After beating up till three o'clock, we were forced to return to our

old port. At six a third and last attempt was made : the wind had fallen, but the sea still ran very high ; however, about eleven o'clock at night, our sailors brought us into a small harbour within Capo della Bruca. A ruined fort was just visible on the left through the darkness of the night : all around was deserted and solitary. We wrapped ourselves up in our great coats, and were soon asleep. The morning of June 20th we found ourselves, on waking, half over the bay of Catania, a light wind carrying us on, and the sombre mountain rising before us, its dark oak woods and dreary lava just checkered with some morning clouds. We entered the white handsome town of Catania at nine o'clock, rejoiced at being released from the faithless ocean.

Our first care, after breakfast, was to present letters to the consul, and prepare for our journey to the great Etna. We deferred all inspection of the town till after our return, much as its regular, airy appearance delighted us. We could think of nothing else but the proceedings of the morrow and the following days. In the evening, however, we were enticed, by an advertisement of a play, into a sort of a barn, nearly in ruins, where the

principal characters were performed by children ; and the prima donna sate for a long time receiving the money. Even here we were astonished at the Italian genius for music. An orchestra of two violins, a base, and a flute, performed in a manner quite masterly.

It was on the 21st of June, the longest day of the year, that we departed to undertake the ascent of Mount Etna. One circumstance, in particular, had made us defer setting out till the cool of the evening. The King, who seems to emulate the old title of *Σικελιῆς τυραννός*, had determined on a conscription for his army. Many persons in Catania, almost ignorant of each other, had been married the preceding evening to avoid falling under the law ; and this morning being fixed on for the drawing, some apprehensions of insurrection were entertained. No occurrence of this kind, however, took place. We were left in perfect peace to admire the wonderful country we were passing. Though we were carried over a road cut out of solid masses of lava, yet it was through gardens of olives, figs, pomegranates, almonds, and mulberries, which rose out of the interstices. The wilder heaps were shaded charitably from the eye by the prickly pear, and the vine entwined

among them to complete the disguise. How extraordinary, that the two elements of fire and water should, in various countries, first pour desolation, and from desolation cause to succeed the greatest advantages! It is an allegory of adversity, which chastises but to benefit. Brydone cruelly slanders the inhabitants of Mount Etna. We found nothing but attention and civility. A little laughter was, indeed, excited in one of the villages at the large white hat of one of our friends; but it was a laugh of good-humour. And, as for their beauty,

“ What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had tinged her cheek a darker brown,”

there may be regularity, and certainly health, in a sunburnt feature,—intelligence in a dark eye.

After an ascent of eight miles we came suddenly on a new scene: the road was no longer steep, but over a shelving plain, covered with a fine black sand, which was planted with vineyards, and contrasted well with their lively green. Here and there rose small conical mountains, each with an extinguished crater, some covered with wood, others, like Monte

Rosso, a red, barren, volcanic substance. These are poetically termed the children of Etna. We first stopped at Signore Giammellaro's house, to whom we had a letter, and procured guides; who, with their mules, received a piastre and a half per diem. At eight o'clock we turned through the avenue up to the convent of St. Maria dell' Arena, at Nicolosi. Two monks are all that now remain in this distant spot: their lazy Benedictine brethren have removed to the sumptuous palace at Catania, and leave these only to collect their revenues. The house has a miserable appearance: one long gallery, hung with pious prints, opens into small rooms, that are kept very dirty; and St. Antonius, the abbot, who hung at the head of my bed, did not choose to preserve a poor heretic from the fleas. We here met with two Dutch gentlemen. One of them had been a long time in the English service, had seen much of the world, and profited much from what he had seen. They requested to be of our party, which we willingly acceded to.

At half past four, June 22d, our cavalcade was set in motion. We passed nearly at the foot of the Monte Rosso, the crater whence the lava of 1669, which destroyed Catania, issued. It has covered all its vicinity with

ashes: it rises in two peaks, forming the opposite sides of the crater, a shape which seems very common in these volcanic cones, the summit of Mount Etna itself having that appearance. Before entering the woody region, a vast intermedium of lava occurs, the widest that I saw on the mountain. I should rather suspect that the woody region previously extended further down, since in some parts, where the lava had been merciful, the wood spread out among it. We were happy to leave this dreary scene for the oak and chestnut woods that are the girdle of Mount Etna. The trees, though not lofty, rise from the finest stems, and are distributed with the picturesque appearance of a park. A small goatherd's shed in the centre of the forest supplied us with some excellent milk, and we pushed on with alacrity for the desolate region. We here encountered another torrent of lava, heaped in dreadful masses; I conjecture it to be the one of 1760; and after winding up by the edge of it, we quickly left all symptoms of vegetation:—for some distance, indeed, various kinds of moss, and beds of camomile, struggle against the severity of climate, and cling to the fissures of the lava; but when we arrived at the first bed of snow, all was bleak and barren.

What a contrast to look upon the world below ! Some fleecy clouds driven across the mountain here and there broke, and discovered a vista that was charming : the eye became confused ; it was carried further and further to search for an horizon, but was previously checked by the atmosphere becoming too dense. To our right, mountains rose that seemed Lilliputian ; the convent of Nicolosi (3000 feet above the sea), appeared in a plain. For some miles around, the green orchards and vineyards of the Piedmontese region skirted the base, till it yielded to the yellow corn-fields of the plain of Catania, through which we could trace the Simætus in all its windings. But the view from Mount Etna has created too many rhapsodies already, and I must stop.

The last four miles, before arriving at the cone, is nearly level : the snow here became more frequent, and the horrid thunderings of the mountain broke on our ear every five seconds. In the midst of this gloomy tract a small white cottage affords shelter for the benighted traveller : it is provided with chairs, bedsteads, tables, &c. One would imagine mischief would spare so charitable a refuge, with-

out the denunciation of punishment pasted on the wall against wilful depredators. This small cottage is perhaps the only benefit, now their constitution has been violated, which exists as a souvenir of their English protectors:—the following is the inscription.

ÆTNAM PERLUSTRANTIBUS

HAS ÆDES

BRITANNI IN SICILIA

ANNO SALUTIS MDCCCXI.

We now for the first time descended from our mules, and advanced on foot to the cone: patches of snow cling round the base; but after a few yards, the sulphurous vapour which rises through the ashes renders the temperature warm and pleasant: though the cinders yield considerably with the foot, still the ascent is (as Hamilton also states) by no means so tiresome as that of Vesuvius, and in the road we had already passed there is no comparison between the two.

It was nearly mid-day when we stood on the extreme summit of Mount Etna, looking down into that vast gulf, which is perhaps many thousand years old. The clouds that had gathered far below, prevented more than occa-

sional glimpses at the tremendous prospect beneath, we turned therefore to the crater. The rim of this crater is very irregular: towards the south-east are two peaks much higher than the rest, the most westerly continually emitting a thin smoke; on the north-west, some way down in the inside of the crater, is a small hill which is remarkably active, and the bottom of the crater, resembling a large gravel pit, coloured with mineral and sulphureous matter, emits a steam like the Solphatara at Naples. We found no inconvenient rarity in the air; no difficulty of respiration; and the thermometer, at the height of 10954 feet above the level of the sea, had risen to *seventy-six*!! The lowest point it ever fell to was at the goatherd's shed, where it was 58.

It is impossible, when a creation of nature presents itself to one's sight, the most vast, the most awful in the world, to prevent recurring to the multitude of stories and conjectures which it has elicited from the poet, the moralist, the historian, and the philosopher. The first, "embodying things unknown," seizes with rapture a spot fitted for fables and characters in unison with his ideas. What place but Etna would have been congenial to Polyphemus and

the Cyclops? To the second, there is no site so fertile in reflection; the mental faculties seem to partake in the elevation, and the traveller* and the poet both become moralists from *Ætna* or the Alps.

“When thus creation’s charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?”

The third only finds fresh subject for doubt, perceives the most sacred chronology attacked, and must think of Voltaire’s severe decision, “that all history whatever is a fable.” The task of the natural philosopher, as it is speculative, so it is infinite: in general they are more ready to refute than to establish a theory. In the last century our English naturalist, Hamilton, adduced the hypothesis, “that mountains are the product of volcanos, and not volcanos of mountains.” Those who have the opportunity of remarking the formation of a crater, during an eruption, will find some foundation for the idea:—the stones that are thrown up form in time a conical mountain; and *Etna*, *Vesuvius*,

* Vide Brydone.

the hills near Naples, in fact, all volcanic mountains, are of a conical form ; such a shape will be the natural result of the origin laid down in the hypothesis. It is rather curious to consider the connexion which subsists between volcanos and its most opposite element, water.—Volcanos are almost always situated near the sea, in their eruptions often throw up immense quantities of water, while the surest sign of an approaching eruption at Vesuvius is the drying up of the wells.

But let us take leave of the summit of this interesting mountain, and pursue our route to the active crater. We crossed the plain at the foot of the cone, and advanced over cinders and masses of rock (which it had thrown up in the first explosion), to within a few hundred yards of this astonishing scene. We now were aware of the diminutive horrors of Vesuvius compared to Etna. The large stones, which were whirled nearly out of sight, formed a black column in the air ; there was hardly any respite ; the bursts were like the roar of a tremendous surf, and succeeded each other as quick as one wave follows another. The earth shook with violence around us, and in many parts was divided by fissures, that threatened future ruin:—no one

but a spectator can imagine the effect. And yet this giant sinks again into insignificance, when compared to the dreadful power that was at work lately in the island of Sumbawa, that covered its vicinity with darkness for three days, was heard 1600 miles off, at Bencoolen, and seemed to forebode

“The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

We now followed our guides to the stream of lava. We stood on a brink, and looked over a gulf filled with a thick smoke which arose before us; we could distinguish nothing, but heard a noise like the rushing of a mighty wind.—This was the stream of lava bursting forth at its source. The earthquakes here continued, and we soon left our dangerous position, and arriving at the pillar which marks the way to bewildered guides, partook of our luncheon of cold fowl and brandy. In these upper regions, of course, few animals reside; but I remarked on the beds of cold lava, that numbers of lady-birds were clustered—I noticed it, for they are not common below.

We began to descend again at one: the woody region looked still more beautiful as we entered it after the desolate solitudes we had

passed ; it belongs almost entirely to Prince di Paterno. These Sicilian noblemen are the most feudal sovereigns existing ; some inherit forests, others towns and cities, others districts ; these they strip, to be stripped again by a despot ruler. We were glad to see the red summit of Monte Rosso again, and even to find ourselves within the dirty walls of the convent. The sun was just setting, and from our windows we beheld it gilding the rich plains of Catania,

“ Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light.”

July 23.—Disgusted with the inattention we had met at St. Maria, we determined to seek for quarters elsewhere, while we should remain upon the mountain. One of our party was too fatigued to proceed, but Captain H—ns—n, the two Dutch gentlemen, and myself, took the road to the village of Zaffarano, situated on the eastern side of the mountain. We now passed through a great portion of the lower region, which is often called the region of Piedmont. Its fertility is not inferior to that of the Piedmont of Italy, and still it little resembles the plains of Turin and Alexandria : it consists more in orchards than corn.

When we arrived at Zaffarano, we were advised by Marchese Pucci (who kindly lent us his map of Etna,) not to proceed to the torrent of lava till night, during the day it presents merely black and sombre cinders ;—the tree of the Cento Cavalli did not, he said, merit the trouble of a visit. Our first attempt was to find some cottage which would afford us lodging ; a clean old woman surrendered hers, which was neat, though small. Captain H—'s servant cooked an excellent dinner, and we feasted on the delicious fruit of Mount Etna. While we were waiting till evening, our Dutch friend amused us with many interesting anecdotes. He had travelled much, even in the East, and his information of persons and places betrayed not only a great intercourse with, but an entire knowledge of the world. We were roused from our conversation by a bustle in the village, and found a fresh eruption had just broke out on the opposite side of the hill, where black columns of smoke, rising over the brow, indicated its direction. Our old woman was so impressed with the idea that it would overflow Zaffarano, that she had already packed up her furniture for moving.

At the very fall of night our cavalcade was

in motion to begin our pilgrimage to the lava, having previously provided ourselves with two bottles of punch to drink at its brink ; we had no moon, and the night, though clear, was dark : all therefore that I could descry by the faint glimmering light of the torches were some dark glens, through which we wound, and a road horribly bisected with ancient masses of lava. The fire suddenly burst upon our view as we mounted a gentle eminence, but we did not stop till we arrived within about five yards, when the heat became almost insupportable. The eruption is exactly situated, (as we conceived in viewing it from the ship,) on the eastern side of the mountain ; the source is about eight miles from Zaffarano, higher up the mountain, and inclining rather to the north of that place. Where we stood the descent was so gradual, that the lava did not, I suppose, gain more than 30 paces in an hour ; but when in the distance we saw it clear the summit of a hill, it rolled along with swiftness, and with the smoothness of oil. It was a sight far more stupendous than the lava of Vesuvius ; it was about half a mile broad, and often heaped up masses ten feet high ; wherever it encountered stubble and weeds it created a bright flame, in other

places it was a deep red colour. With rapid strides it was advancing on some fields of corn unluckily not yet cut; nothing but its own caprice can arrest its progress. In trying the lava, I found that its consistency was very different to that of Vesuvius, when red-hot it did not admit any impression, nor like that of the latter mountain allow money to be fixed in it. When cold, it was a more compact substance, without those holes that give the lava of Vesuvius so much the appearance of scoria and cinders*. We stayed a long time admiring this wonderful scene, a scene which is not in the power of all travellers to contemplate; for though Etna, when it breaks forth, is by far the most dreadful of the two mountains, yet it is not so constantly active as Vesuvius:—the last eruption was in 1813. We drank our country's health in a glass of punch, and returned to our snug cottage to take a little sleep till break of day.

July 24.—At sun-rise we set out on our return to Catania. As the whole road winds through that country which has already excited such eulogiums in travellers, minute description

* I find since, that Brydone nearly contradicts me, and says the lava is more porous.—I have specimens which will prove the contrary.

is not necessary; it reminded me, however, much of some parts of Switzerland, though its fertility is far greater. On our right we passed many hills, each hollowed into a crater, but now shaded with groves of chestnut:—the days of their violence are before the records of history. We traversed a very ancient but desolate tract of lava, a short way from Zaffarano; perhaps this is the one that impeded the Romans in their advance upon Syracuse. At about ten o'clock we arrived at Catania, perfectly delighted with the wonders we had beheld, and readily, on their account, overlooking the fatigue and other *désagrémens* of such an excursion. In fact, at this season of the year the difficulties of ascent are very trifling, and with well regulated precautions may be easily overcome, even by ladies. I have been twice up Vesuvius, and each time felt far greater fatigue. The sole parting recommendation I would give to travellers, is to prefer in a Sicilian summer night a bed of dry leaves in the Grotto dei Capri to the filthy mattresses of the convent at Nicolosi.

CHAPTER VIII.

CATANIA TO MESSINA.

Πολιν καλλιστην Ζαγκλην.

Herodotus.

“ Il semble que la nature ait voulu prouver à l’art que ce, qu’elle opere, est infiniment plus parfait et plus majestueux que tout ce que celui-ci produit à force de travail et d’application.” *Reidesel.*

OUR thoughts had been so directed to Mount Etna, that it was impossible to dedicate a moment to Catania till our return. This town, which has all the advantages of being built in modern style, viz. broad streets and regular buildings, does not, except in the opinion of a Messenian, yield to any city in the island but Palermo. I do not assert that its churches are remarkably splendid ; for the cathedral, in my opinion, possesses but one object of curiosity, a large picture in the sacristy representing the eruption of 1669. The lava incircling the city

to the south, the inhabitants hurrying away by sea, are delineated with the accuracy of a map, though not perhaps the execution of a cabinet picture. Its antiquities could hardly hope to survive these tremendous inroads ; and though the vast corridors and vomitories of both the theatre and amphitheatre still exist, yet, from not being able to trace their connexion with the rest of the edifice, they appear more like dismal cellars.

In museums, what place can be richer than Catania ? Though it may be difficult for the traveller to obtain coins, &c. of value, in a country where the people are too ignorant to fix on a just price, and bring, as they did to me in the *Latomia* of Syracuse, coins of France and Spain as Roman medals ; in a country too, where intaglios are so scarce as to require some time to find any of value : still these difficulties are much diminished to a native, particularly a land-owner. Besides the continual choice of medals presented to them, they have in the vicinity of Catania, Centorbi, so renowned for its vases, which yield not to those of Etruria. For the naturalist Etna produces its lava, *Simætus* its amber, and a genial climate the choicest plants. Our first steps were directed to the

museum of Prince Biscari. As there is an inconvenient custom in Sicily of sleeping from twelve till three, our cicerone conceiving, I suppose, that we must in venturing out at those hours be fond of heat, danced us about the town, till his friend the custode might have finished his nap. We remonstrated, but his jargon overpowered us, and in the midst of the parley the man appeared. In the museum of Biscari there are many things that would have been more interesting if we had not previously seen the collection at Naples. The bald-headed intelligent bust of Scipio struck me the most forcibly, since I imagined it to be taken at that period when he was about to stamp his immortality by his descent upon Africa. The bust was found at Catania, and Scipio had at that period the province of Sicily.

But, from the museum, let us turn to its proprietor. Principe di Biscari, who formed the museum, was the Mæcenas of his age : he built a theatre for the Catanians, he erected an aqueduct to supply them with water, he turned the attention of the Sicilians to the treasures of their country by his *Viaggio dell' Antichità*—and his son has inherited his noble qualities ; for while I was at Catania, he offered govern-

ment one hundred men clothed and armed at his own expense, to save the town from the hated conscription before mentioned. In this conscription there is one unparalleled calamity, that the resource of obtaining a substitute is not to be ventured on, for every one must answer that this substitute will not desert. A very respectable man, I have been informed, of Palermo, provided at great expense a substitute, who deserted; he found another; he deserted. In despair, and perfectly ruined, he was now obliged to serve himself, and when he joined the army he found his two substitutes had been admitted in other regiments.

The convent of Benedictines was celebrated for its wealth, even when the church was in possession of all the richest domains in Italy, France, and Spain. Now, when the many-headed hydra is nearly crushed, it is unexampled. We ascended by a staircase of white marble highly polished, the ceiling of handsome fresco; this leads to long corridors that extend round two quadrangles, and ends in a charming garden raised on the surface of a bed of lava; immense masses of this are heaped without, while in the centre you view a little Paradise. A monk came to us in the garden, and begged

to conduct us to the chapel. Here the magnificence of the Benedictines has yielded to their good taste—every thing is simple, the pictures of the martyrdoms of the saints merely serve to relieve the white walls, and the marbles are not prodigally wasted. But in their organ we are recalled to a sense of their sumptuous pride, and if expense can be excused it certainly may be in an object, which tends more than any other to raise devotion in an audience. We repeated our visit, again to hear this wonderful instrument, and again were more delighted. Our good-natured monk showed us the museum, which may not appear so valuable as that of Biscari, but much in the latter collection is the property of the city. Captain H— was rather amused to find his old friends Vishnu and the Ganges, in some Indian drawings, denominated Americans. The library is a handsome saloon, well arranged: the refectories are two very spacious vaulted halls, surrounded with little tables, where the dinner was laid in messes of four each. The view from all sides of the convent over the plain and bay is the best the city affords:—but I have not done yet. These Benedictines enjoy a revenue of eighty ounces per diem to support forty brethren!! This is their life of mortification!

The evening that we left Catania we visited the museum of Baron Recupero, by far the most interesting of them all, though seldom pointed out by the cicerone, for as the baron allows nothing to be taken by his servant, the cicerone of course is not bribed to lead travellers there. The Barone di Recupero and his brother (who are nephews of the famous Canonico mentioned by Brydone) take the greatest delight in showing their cabinets to strangers. The one exhibits a collection of natural history, and the other his vases, gems, and medals. They neither interfere in each other's province, which are both admirable of their kind; the coins are assorted geographically—the intaglios are far the most beautiful I have ever seen, particularly an Hercules and Anteus, and a rape of Proserpine: the execution of the last would make a modern engraver sigh. There is also a gallery of pictures, but not of value. One of the largest nunneries in Sicily exists at Catania, the Battista di St. Juliano. The chapel, which is the only part of course that we could see, is surrounded by little grates where the nuns come to hear mass, or to confess without any possibility of their being seen.

July 26.—At nine o'clock in the evening we embarked on board our speronara. The twin-

klings lights of Catania, with the dark outline of the mountain behind; and the stream of lava on the right, the phosphoric appearance in the waters, all would have formed an admirable night picture. It was very dark when we passed the basaltic pillars near Aci*. I have little doubt that the ancients have formed their story of Acis, on the death of some shepherd occasioned by a stone hurled from one of the craters of Etna; and poetical fiction attributed it to the jealousy of Polyphemus, whom Virgil tells us inhabited the mountain. Our mariners indulged us this night with their evening hymn, which they sing with occasional pauses. Brydone says it soothed him to sleep; I found I slept better when it was over.

At day-break we were in the bay of Taormina; many of the promontories, even at this distance, are formed by lava. We landed at Giardini at eleven, and found a tolerable neat albergo, "la Fortuna," kept by a custode of a church; and if he always gets as much as he asks, he will soon be under considerable obligations to the blind goddess. We mounted on

* I find this place in the maps termed Aci as well as Jaci. I have preferred the least corrupted designation.

mules up the rock to Taormina. The views from this spot are so remarkably celebrated, that description is unnecessary. The theatre, which is another of those colossal antiquities, that seem too overgrown for its purpose, stands singly on an elevated crag, and, like its rival of Syracuse, commanding a view that must have often arrested the attention of an audience from fiction to reality*. No unhappy resource, indeed, if condemned to sit out a dull play. The loveliest scene is, however, at the back of the seats; the mountains of Calabria, gray from distance, the blue sea, the road to Messina winding over rock and dale, such are its peculiar features. We clambered up a high cliff to the ruins of a Saracen castle that hung over the town, but we found mountains still rising far above us to the west, and on their very pinnacle the little town of Mola perched like an eagle's nest. We obtained a glass of wine at a cottage in our return, and received it from the hands of a most beautiful peasant girl, whose Grecian

* I have selected from some drawings, that were done at my desire by a Maltese, this view, and that from the theatre at Syracuse, to be engraved, from their being the most celebrated.

Engraved by W. P. Crockett

Colony at Sacramento





countenance reminded me of the origin of her country. On our return to Giardini we found the town all gaiety from a wedding, and the bride, covered with ribbons, riding home on a donkey. The early age of Sicilian marriages is well known. Our landlord's son, not yet sixteen, has been married fifteen months, and is a father : he gave us some interesting particulars of poor Zaffarano, for he had been there the day before to remove some furniture. The lava had taken a course between the corn fields ; but if it continues, must advance upon the village.

We left Giardini at seven o'clock : the rocks were beautifully lit up by the setting sun, and as it grew darker, the caverns were illuminated by the torches of the fishermen, who by the glare attract the fish around them. There perhaps is not a place so desirable for an Apicius as the eastern coast of Sicily, but especially in fish. The *pesce di spada*, and their tunny fish, would in England claim rank with the turbot. During the whole of the night of the 27th, we were towed along the coast by bullocks, for the wind (which near Messina is usually the case) was blowing through the straits from the north-east.

We entered the superb harbour of Messina at ten o'clock, and now for the first time I beheld a rival of the bay of Naples. Of all the spots I have visited, Messina is alone worthy to be compared with it. The façade of the town, (if I may be permitted the expression) which fronts the sea, is a row of regular white houses; hills covered with villas rise behind; the straits, not above three miles broad, are bounded by the vast mountains of Calabria, covered with verdure, and at the various hours of the day changing its shades and hues. One evening Captain H———n and myself walked up the road to Melazzo, and clambered a hill from whence we had an excellent prospect of this view at the hour of sunset. What a pity that such a country belongs to such a government! It is like a diamond in the hands of a savage, who cannot estimate the value of his possession. It might be thought prejudice to draw comparisons, but some politicians have marked out another destiny for Sicily, which the Sicilians would have embraced with pleasure. We stopped in our way home at a small cottage for a glass of water: the old woman asked us if we came from Malta, and were “Inglesi,” in a manner most cordial.

But this beautiful country has been subject to some of the greatest natural calamities, plague and earthquakes. A slight shock of the latter happened the morning we were there, but the Messinese now declare most of their houses are earthquake proof, being built on arches. As this idea gives them security, “ ’tis folly to be wise.” The credulity of the Messinese, and their cowardly dread of foreseeing danger, is still more strikingly exemplified on the occasion of that other horrible calamity. It was actually published as a warning to the Maltese in 1813, and from the official account in Italian I have translated it.

On the 20th of May, 1743, there arrived in the port of Messina a “ Genoese vessel, with a Neapolitan crew, commanded by a Genoese master, named Giacomo Bozzo, but from the time he had placed himself under the Neapolitan protection had taken the name of Aniello Bara. The cargo consisted of wool, grain, tobacco, and some pieces of linen, brought from the Morea, which was at that time, or had been some time before, infected with the plague. The master, foreseeing that he should not be admitted into Messina, if coming direct from the Morea, perfidiously touched at Misselongi,

in the gulf of Lepanto, opposite Cephalonia, and there procured a clean bill of health, with which he proceeded to Messina. On his arrival, he presented it in the usual manner, allowing his cargo to be only wool and grain; and to account for his having on board one person less than the number specified in the bill, he declared, on oath, that one of the crew had fallen into the sea during the voyage. This declaration on oath, together with the exhibition of a clean bill of health, induced the officers of La Sanita (who were as yet ignorant of the other circumstances, namely, that he had come from the infected parts of the Morea, and that one or two of the crew had died on board), to admit the cargo into quarantine in the Lazaretto, where with the usual formalities, they deposited the wool and the corn. Nevertheless, according to all human appearances, the infection would never have been introduced into the city, if it had not been through the means of a fisherman, who afterwards, on the point of death, disclosed the fatal secret.

“ He confessed, that soon after the arrival of the captain, he found means to procure from him some balls of tobacco wrapped up in canvas, and some pieces of linen, which he con-

veyed to his house in a part of the town named Pizzillari, where in fact the disease first appeared : thus the importation of these infected goods was the cause of those consequences that ensued. I say thus much to gratify the magistrates, who took indeed the most vigorous and prudent measures in the Lazaretto, for the preservation of public health, and who, in the fulfilment of their duty, courageously sacrificed their lives by exposing themselves to certain destruction, but they were betrayed by the under officers in whom they confided. The death of the captain, March 24, gave the first alarm, but being followed the 27th by one of the sailors, with all the symptoms of plague, the consternation became general, so that in public council it was determined, that the cargo disembarked, together with the ship, should be burnt, and the rest of the crew confined in a separate part of the Lazaretto, under a strong guard ; all which was punctually executed, followed by more vigorous precautions on the intervention of the chief nobility. These measures contributed much to lull the apprehensions of the people, and as the rest of the crew continued to enjoy perfect health, the security became so general, that at the expiration of forty days,

the Archbishop fixed the 15th of May to celebrate *Te Deum*, in gratitude for the deliverance from the most terrible of divine judgments : but the church was hardly full of the devout, the senators had hardly taken their seats, when a physician addressed them with the horrid intelligence, that some of his patients had exhibited symptoms like the plague, and advised them to postpone their thanks to the Most High, till they were convinced his apprehensions were unfounded. This account being spread over the church, so great was the infatuation of the people against the physician, that with difficulty he saved himself by flight into a convent. Too soon it was clearly seen, that the physician had spoken the truth : he continued to affirm it against the opinion of the rest of the faculty, who, alas ! too obstinately maintained contrary opinions ; thus the evil which now began gradually to show itself, was considered solely as epidemic, and produced by the unhealthy season, which in reality had caused some epidemic, and even mortal cases the winter before in parts of Italy and Sicily. This circumstance, united with the natural love of these physicians to their country ; the horror arising from the name of the plague ; the good

opinion held of the Lazaretto, and the proceedings of the magistrates, confirmed their first opinion, particularly as it was not perceived that the disease was communicated to those who attended the sick, and because the women were in some measure alone attacked. These circumstances united, concurred to establish that erroneous opinion, and would have been, indeed, plausible, had not the plague so soon before existed in this Lazaretto, which alone ought to have convinced them the malady was a real plague; hence it is difficult to conceive how the persuasion that it was not pestilential arose*. The Messinese, however, sensible of the judgment from Heaven, endeavoured to appease divine wrath by religious ceremonies and processions, at which all classes of people attended, and particularly, as was natural, those who were sick. So that the poison, at first weak, not only acquired force by communication, but so spread through the city, that it at last broke out like a general conflagration. From the 15th to the 31st of May, between 3 and 4000 persons died, attended by the physicians,

* This account is a literal translation; but it is curious, in my opinion, to wonder at the origin of a persuasion for which the reasons have just been given.

who, with ocular testimonies of the plague, persisted in their opinion so obstinately, that on the 31st of May, 33 physicians declared solemnly it was not plague. However the mortality having increased to more than 100 daily, the government determined to take the same precautions as in the plague, and issued the necessary regulations, upon which so great a panic ensued, that almost all the population deserted the city, excepting the magistrates of health and the senate, and of these only *one* member of each *survived*. The great mortality did not last more than 20 days, from the 12th of June to the 1st of July, when it suddenly ceased ; probably from there not being more means of spreading the poison, as those alone who were shut up in their houses, or had been attacked and survived the malady remained. The living were not sufficient to bury the dead ; but at the end of June the government allowed 60 soldiers, covered with skin, and armed with poles, to collect the bodies in the streets and houses, and to burn them all, men and women, rich and poor together. An operation, that for many days caused an odour not to be conceived or described.”

CHAPTER IX.

MESSINA THROUGH CALABRIA,

“ Des montagnes noircies par des forêts de pins dont le sombre effet contraste avec les neiges qui couronnent leur cîme ; les rochers suspendus sur des gouffres profonds ; plus loin la brillante vegetation des plaines et le mouvement de l'industrie,” &c. &c. *Notice sur la Calabre*, page 11.

WE loaded our speronara with provisions and all the necessaries for the voyage, and sailed from Messina, July 1st. Our passage was through Charybdis, no longer turbulent and dangerous ; but in a situation where annual earthquakes form continual changes, much may be said to exculpate the ancients from exaggeration and fable. How accurate is Virgil's geography, the descriptions in Pliny's letters, the journey of Horace ! Can no excuse then be found for a casual difference ? But let us remark, as I have often before had occasion to do, the beauty of classic allegory. Charybdis, a whirlpool, gathering treasures

and merchandize into its abyss, is fabled to have been a woman of unbounded avarice; and Scylla, a romantic rock, in a lovely site, but dashing back the sea from its precipices, was a beautiful girl, who was thus changed by Circe to frighten away her lover Glaucus, a deity of the sea.

We coasted along during the day the craggy shores of Calabria ultra. Stromboli on our left was frequently smoking, but at night emitted no flame. We arrived at the picturesque cape of Spartivento at sunset, and passing the bay of St. Euphemia in the night, had in consequence no view of the famous plains of Maida. In the morning we landed at Amantea, the place for which our passports were directed; but what was our surprise when we found ourselves denied pratique, owing to some trifling omission in not having previously touched at a larger port. We were, therefore, obliged to row to Paola, 16 miles farther in a sultry calm, nor did the verdure and beauty of the Calabrian coast reconcile us to the voyage.

It was evening when we arrived at Paola; two of our party did not feel inclined for the roughing of Calabria. We, therefore, seated ourselves round a tub upon the beach, and

all, before parting, partook of a farewell supper by moonlight. Captain H—ns—n and Mr. Gl—v—r then set sail; while Mr. H—w—ll and myself, one servant and a small quantity of baggage, of which provisions formed the principal part, mounted the steep ascent to Paola. The village is prettily placed in a nook among the hills; a fine avenue shadows it, and the road is conducted thither on arches over a ravine. We found a small locanda in Paola, with a very civil landlord, and immediately hired mules to commence our labours on the morrow.

There are very few places that had so thoroughly excited my curiosity as Calabria. Universal consent had denominated it as the most savage country existing in Europe. Italians look upon it with all the horror that the Cimmerian forests once caused to Rome; they shudder at the idea of crossing it, as if it were “a bourne from whence no traveller returns.” Few persons with such accounts visit it. Those that do, conceive it necessary to magnify the undertaking; and I was rather inclined to suspect that I should be as much surprised in Calabria, as former travellers were on visiting Sicily, before the ridiculous reports of the Nea-

politans had been contradicted by actual observation. We had no guide to a country where there have been no travellers; the only account I have ever seen is written by a Capitaine de Rivarol: this is merely a pamphlet, but I will refer to it in passing, as it is on this subject unique*.

At four o'clock, the morning of July 3rd, we mounted our mules: our escort, which was declared absolutely necessary, consisted of five men armed with guns. We left the coast at St. Lucido, and began to wind up the Apennines. The scene was worthy the pen of Mrs. Radcliffe: the morning was fresh; the twisting path by which we ascended was absolutely perfumed by the broom in blossom, myrtle, violets, and the sweetest flowers; but these we soon left, to enter the enormous forests of beech which crown the higher parts of the mountains. I had never before seen such wood in Italy, never, indeed, except among the Alps. We now and then gained a view, through a vista in the trees, into distant valleys, but all were sombre with forests. No wonder that people talk here of banditti.

* I have seen since many accounts of Calabria, but Rivarol's is the only one of modern date.

I immediately recollected the forests where Schedoni was attacked by Spalatro. At nine we emerged on the side overhanging the valley of Cosenza. This valley is of amazing length and beauty, runs along between two chains of the Apennines, which have divided at the head of the vale, the one following the Mediterranean shore, the other the Adriatic. While the mountains are covered with woods, the valley between is fertile beyond conception. We soon descended again into woods, but these were of chestnut, and in their bosom is the village of St. Fili. We wished to have breakfasted here; however there was no room fit to enter, except one, which, with a gayer exterior than the rest, proved the shop of an apothecary, with this pompous inscription, “*Medicamen inventum meum.*” We were, therefore, obliged to continue; and notwithstanding the attractions of some of the most beautiful women (whose fair complexions, delicate features, and slight limbs, seem to denote a different origin from the ordinary Italian) preferred opening our wallet under a chestnut tree, while our guide, who had hitherto been eager in gathering us flowers, &c. proved himself more usefully officious by the discovery of a clear cold rivulet.

Our journey afterwards in the valley was very oppressive from the heat, and I was rejoiced to arrive at Cosenza, the capital of Calabria. We could find here no inn, and, according to our custom in Dalmatia, seating ourselves in a *caffé*, our servant at last procured us a wretched lodging for the night. It consisted of two small rooms, divided off from a large chamber by partitions, which went but half-way to the ceiling; the exterior part of the room was occupied by muleteers. Our next desire was to find a conveyance, and we procured at last a return vetturino, who charged us the immoderate price of 45 ducats. After all was settled, we mounted the hill which hangs over Cosenza to view its site. Cosenza is situated at the southern extremity of the valley, where it commences to break up into hills. One bold crag, crowned with a castle, commands the town; the river below is crossed by a picturesque bridge, and woods surround it on every side. Lower in Calabria than this, the road is very bad. We followed a crowd of people to a chapel on the hill, but I could not ascertain what was the ceremony. Rows of benches were arranged, of which the front seats were occupied by women, and the men

in the rear. Venders were employed in carrying about iced water, lemonade, and cakes, and in the pulpit was seated a priest in a white nightcap, with two boys and a livery servant behind. The scene was so ridiculous, that we retired for fear of laughing.

The cathedral of Cosenza is in the market-place: an inscription informs us it is the oldest in Calabria, being built by Honorius 9th, c1000, and was repaired, 1739, by Michael Maria Galeetta, for the following reason, which I own I cannot understand. “Ædificare Sion in sanguinibus nolens.” There is a very fine convent out of the town, as well situated as convents always are. We supped on hard eggs and ice; the latter is here a necessary of life.

July 4th.—After some altercation respecting the necessity of taking guards, which we began to think ridiculous, we left Cosenza. The road is tolerably good, through a country whose fertility, I believe, so far from being useful, is a secret to the government. In a few places, indeed, where the bridges were not finished, we had to ford some rivulets, but they are only dangerous in winter. We then left the first valley, which I name the valley of Cosenza,

and mounted some hills covered with under-wood. Our coachman was in dreadful alarm, declaring that it was a spot noted for robbery ; we were joined by a whole cavalcade going the same way, and as we were hurried along at full speed, it was ridiculous to observe the anxiety of each not to be last. The place which he pointed out was certainly admirably calculated for the purpose. It was a glen between two hills, both covered with brushwood ; escape would be impossible, as on each side there would be a hill to ascend.

The second valley we entered was very different from the last ; it was a sad melancholy spot : a little river glided among some dark woods, which lined the road : there were a few abortive attempts at cultivation, but the corn was intermingled with briars ; there were no villages or signs of busy life. The next chain of hills was crowned by the ruined village of Tarsia, where we stopped to bait, as our coachman's fears had not allowed him to rest before. We could get nothing but some wine tolerably good, and deliciously iced. In the evening we pursued our route to Esaro, the first village that we passed at all in tolerable

repair, and the distance had been 28 Italian miles, about 36 English. We were first doubtful whether we should push on for Morano that night, but the risk of travelling after dark was too great to be run. A widow of the Giudice del Paese, with the greatest civility, gave us up her room, in which there were two beds. In fact we found the courtesy of this people, reckoned barbarous, exceeding; and again I was struck with the female beauty of the peasantry; their dress, too, was elegant, a bodice of blue, leaving the shift sleeves uncovered, but ornamented with coloured ribbons, their petticoats of a different colour, but made too much à la Tyrolese. The most distinguishing mark in the male dress is the sugar-loaf hat with the sloping brim, it resembles exactly the hats of the reign of James I., such as Hudibras is depicted with. In the course of a little conversation with our good widow, she seemed to state that Italian was not the language of the country; and on my asking how this happened, she added, "We are not Italians, but Albanese." This perfectly explained the superiority of beauty and costume among the women. These Albanese fixed their colonies

here after the expedition of Scanderbeg, and still retain their language and dress, though in other respects they much resemble the native Calabrians.

One of the most disgusting marks of barbarism among the lower orders is their blind subservience to priestcraft. So true is it, from the days of Becket to the present, that the servitude of superstition not only marks the want of, but retards civilization. Rivarol, who had means of observation, remarks it. “*Les moines répandus avec profusion dans cette province, classe plus éclairée abusaient de leur influence pour arrêter les progrès des lumières qui l’eussent ou diminuée ou détruite.*” We cannot but recollect the policy of the papal bulls in former days, and the sacred influence held over their votaries by the Brahmins in India: they all are actuated by one principle, that of raising their authority on the ignorance of their fellow creatures. In passing through the country I saw two instances of the meddling power of the priests. The first was, when we were at supper on the beach of Paola: a priest came and informed us we must give him some money to obtain permission to eat meat, as it was Friday.

The second was in our journey to Esaro ; one of the horses having lost a shoe, no blacksmith would assist us on a Sunday, without leave from the priest.

After a very comfortable lodging at Esaro, we started at four the following morning. The sun was just rising when we came upon the third valley ; but how different was the scene to the vale we had last crossed ! It was formed into the most romantic slopes, covered with vineyards, woods, small towns, and ruined castles. It was not, like the former valleys, inclosed on all sides with mountains, but it descended gradually on the right till it met the bay of Tarentum. The upper part of the vale on the left changed its fertility for forests, till it was bounded by the ridge of Apennines ; and before us a most hideous barrier of mountains seemed to forbid all passage. The conviction, that such a country must have long been celebrated, would alone have reminded me that this was the *vale of Sybaris* ; and I now more forcibly recollected that we were traversing the famous country of Magna Græcia, where arts, learning, and power, had been established long before the rest of Italy were more than barbarian hordes. In that plain below stood Sybaris,

which could once send 300,000 men into the field, whose walls were six miles in circumference, and whose suburbs extended for seven miles on the borders of the Cratis. The little stream we had followed yesterday was the Cratis. The luxury of the Sybarites was proverbial, and if site can affect the morals of a people, I conceive the vale of Sybaris far more conducive to voluptuousness than its rivals in dissipation, the plains of Capua, or the shores of Syracuse : I prefer it much to either.

After passing the plain, we mounted the hills of Castrovillari, preparatory to the Apennines. The whole of this country is too beautiful to find terms to describe ; sometimes it is a garden, at others a park. “ *Patrie du soleil, qui la feconde, cette terre ne laisse à l’homme que la peine de recueillir ses dons.*” (Rivarol, page 59.) But we were soon to leave this for a far different scene. The Apennines that we were going to cross have been the object of fear to all people in all times. Here, among these dark woods and glens, the bands of the bandit Carmine Antonio spread terror through all the French army. Courage, intelligence, exploits, which seem like the anecdotes of romance, mark the actors and the incidents which have taken

place in these valleys. A hardiness inculcated from infancy, a generosity to those in his power, and inflexibility in death, were the traits of Paráfanti, who, when both his thighs were broken with balls, still took as steady an aim at his pursuers. Such a man must either be a villain or a hero.

The scenery of the country is in unison with these acts; it is wild beyond conception. As we wound into the defile of Morano, some of the conical mountains appeared to me of such a volcanic shape, that before I referred to Rivarol's work, I had formed the same opinion as his. "*La nature du sol de quelques sommets de l'Apennin a fait presumer avec raison qu'ils ont été dans le cours des siècles le siège de quelques volcans **," (page 65.) The vale of Morano is Switzerland in Italy:—alpine views with a southern sky. The town of Morano hangs upon an insulated rock in the middle of the vale, and to avoid ascending it, we stopped to bait at a small house outside the town. I could not but smile to think how even a literal description of this hovel might mislead the imagination. The stairs were marble, the rooms lofty, and hung

* A gentleman has informed me he was shown, in 1818, a small active crater near Rotonda, which had lately broke out.

with pictures ; the chairs, the cornices, the doors thickly gilt, and with all this it was the most filthy disgusting hovel that could be conceived. Just as we were ready for departure, our coachman demanded an escort, as we were going to pass a most dangerous spot ; but not having yet found any occasion for alarm, and being fully convinced that he wanted to employ some friends of his own, (for Morano was his native place,) we refused.

On leaving Morano, we instantly began the bleak ascent of Monte Grasso, and soon were so elevated as to overlook all the country we this day had passed, even down to the waters of the sea near Sybaris. To turn from such a country to the rocks we were traversing was indeed a most dreary prospect, and our coachman now became so overwhelmed with fear, that every passing peasant he fancied a bravo. At the top of the mountain, we entered a bleak, solitary plain, which extends for about two miles at its summit. Never have I seen, and never shall I forget, a spot so melancholy and so appalling ; a few savage-looking men driving cattle were the only signs of life ; woods surrounded us on all sides, and the terrors of our coachman increased every moment. In this

plain, called the Campo Temesi, a most furious battle had been fought between the Hereditary Prince and the French, and perhaps there is no spot more congenial to the genius of war. Among the ancients, also, this place was proverbially held in horror, a malignant spirit was supposed to preside here, and when they cited a place of difficult access, they said, “*aderit Genius Temesis.*”

I felt myself very happy when we had crossed; some alarm had entered both our minds, but I began to think it groundless. We came to the descent—all who are in the least acquainted with the Alps may imagine the scene: the road ran at the side of a deep abyss,—above and below us were the finest forests of beech and fir. I was leaning out of the carriage, pointing out their beauty to Mr H—w—ll, and enjoying the fresh breeze of evening, for it was near sunset, when a bullet whistled close by the carriage. My suspicions on leaving the dismal plain above had been so thoroughly lulled, that for a moment I was not conscious of what it was; till looking round, I saw the coachman off the box, on the point of flinging himself on his knees: our servant Ramouger, with a presence of mind to which we owed our preservation, had

just time to seize the reins ; he managed in some miraculous manner to keep the coachman from entirely leaving the box, and encouraged the horses to a full gallop : another shot instantly followed from the bushes that skirted the road, but the bank being rather high, it prevented them, I suppose, from taking good aim. The road was not broad enough for two carriages to pass : there was no parapet to guard us from the precipice on our right ; yet we dashed down it full speed, when a single start must have sent us into eternity. A third shot followed close to us, and just at this moment we came to a complete angle in the road ; I now gave it up for lost. We were going at that rate that nothing but fortune could effect the turn. It was quite unforeseen ; there was no wall to prevent our going over ; and, by heavens ! we cleared it : I have many an hour thought of it since, and believed it a dream. But what now was our security ? there was a short cut from the upper road to the lower, by which the bravo might easily intercept us. Mr. H—w—ll looked out of the window, and exclaimed, there was one running—but luckily before we had turned, the door of the carriage had flown open from the velocity with which we were going, and a

hat fallen out, the bravo stopped to pick it up. We arrived first at the second turn ;—we cleared it ;—the road was now straight ;—Ramouger shouted bravo, and we went like the wind.—I believe we had galloped a mile, and not a word had been uttered on either side, when just arriving at the corner of a huge rock which hid the road, we saw four men galloping up fully armed—all, I thought, was now indeed brought to a close, but they turned out friends, the escort of the Duca di Cassano. We shouted to them to push on against the banditti, which they did at full speed, and the Duca congratulated us warmly on our escape—an escape indeed, which, when we consider all the chances against us, could never have been executed by the greatest skill, but only by Providence. If a horse or our servant had been shot,—if our harness, which was always breaking before, had given way—if any accident had happened to our shattered carriage—if, as they ought to have done, the brigands had advanced into the road, these (putting out of the question the dangers of the road) would have effectually prevented our escape.

I have since reflected upon our adventure, to consider whether we were intentionally way

laid. The circumstance which has led me to the suspicion, was having passed a litter and many mules with baggage on the Campo Temesi. Why did they not stop these, if not waiting for other prey? How easily they might have obtained intelligence, or even gone forward from Morano during the two hours we were baiting. It will be perhaps said, why did not they attack us on the ascent rather than the descent? but local circumstances were in favour of the latter: the ascent is over barren rocks, where their approach would be open; in descending, woods and thickets overhang the road, and it is a spot most romantically fitted for an ambush. That they did not choose to attack us openly is already certain, most likely conceiving that we must be armed; in our case, our want of arms was inconsequential, for they could not have been used, nor, if the brigands had resolutely remained in the woods, could an escort have assisted us. Whatever is, is right!! We continued our road down the winding defiles at a very quick pace, and our coachman was delighted to point out at last the conical rock of Rotonda in the distance. The people soon heard our story, and all had some horrid anecdotes of this passage of St. Martino, among

which cursed mountains, I recommend Mrs. Radcliffe to take her next trip, for the scenery is such that even she cannot imagine*.

We offered to take guards to the village of Castellucio, but our coachman thought it unnecessary. Nor indeed was he in the wrong; what a contrast was there to the country we had passed! This valley surpassed in beauty even those we had before admired, how much more lovely then did it appear after the mountains of Temesi. The peasantry were returning to the villages from their daily labour, and as they are

* Where so romantic an incident has happened, I have been fearful to expatiate upon the scenery, lest it should be thought I was working up a description. The spot is not in the least altered since Hill's account in 1791. These are his words:—"Upon leaving this plain (Campo Temesi) we entered the terrific pass. It is a deep chasm between towering mountains, darkened by the thickest shade, so that a small party of robbers, by securing a good situation on the higher parts, may begin an attack upon a large company without the least fear of being overcome, as they might easily escape among the thickets, should the travellers attempt to climb the rocks and make them prisoners. We descended by a very rugged path," (the road was made under Murat) "which led us out of the chasm to a forest of noble oak, and then entering upon a fine new road, soon arrived at Rotonda, a little town, so called from its singular situation, being built upon a conical hill detached from all others, and not unlike Glastonbury Tor-hill in Somersetshire."—P. 249.

accompanied by their whole family, the scene was lively in the extreme ; the infants are carried on the heads of the parents in baskets, where they sit and laugh in triumph. We slept at Castelluccio—I wish to forget all but some excellent cherries that we obtained ; as for figs, though they are the celebrated produce of Calabria, they are not equal to those of Etna.

July 6.—Two gens d'armes were ready, armed *cap-à-pie*, at day-break, to escort us over the confines of Calabria. The valley of Rotonda being but a short distance across, some reasonable apprehensions might be entertained that the banditti would pass over to the opposite mountains, and way-lay us in the ascent, particularly as the ground is notoriously good for an ambuscade. We arrived, however, at their summit in safety, and our escort declaring their presence any longer unnecessary, wished us a *buon viaggio*, and left us. The country, however, that we traversed the whole of the day was so wild and melancholy, the woods and cliffs hanging over the road so resembling those of Calabria (for we were now in Basilicata), that the fears of our coachman who cast many an anxious glance at every bush and crag, though they were laughable, were not wholly unwarrantable. Not

many years, I am convinced, are elapsed since these mountains and glens were one uninterrupted dreary forest. Forest scenery every where prevails ; sometimes the trees are cleared so as to appear like a park, but on the inaccessible heights they darken into solid masses. Who can wonder that the genius of Salvator Rosa was tinctured by the sombre ideas that were familiar to him from his infancy.

After passing the dells of Lauria, we again rose over mountains, till we arrived at the edge of a hollow, not unlike a crater, but shaded on all sides with chestnuts. In its bosom stands the curious town of Lago Negro, consisting of houses built in a straggling manner round a large irregular piazza. The houses were low and roofed with brick ; the numerous chimneys shewed a more rigid winter prevailed here, and the head-dress of the peasantry was exchanged from the white linen to blue cloth. At the *poste* we found very clean and neat accommodations, and we determined henceforward both for expedition and safety to continue our route with the courier.

On a fine moonlight morning, July 7th, we set off in the cumbrous vehicle that carries the letters. The castle of Lago Negro, situated on a

picturesque rock—the town below—the woods around, were beautiful by this light ; but a rapid descent and the excellent road, which continues almost all the way, soon caused us to bid a long and, I hope, a last adieu to these extraordinary countries. Our courier brought us an account of the conclusion of the adventure in the pass of St. Martino. The escort of the Duke of Cassano had pushed on so quick, that the brigands were obliged to rush down into the dell below ; they were preparing to pursue, when a volley from the woods above killed one of their mules—all then became hushed ; and they were afraid of leaving the carriage, so the villains below escaped. This account seems to authorise an assertion of a peasant who rode behind our carriage and declared that when we set off, a volley was fired after us ; we always conceived that the brigands had not been more than the three who fired. Since this period all travellers take a very strong escort from Rotonda to Morano.

We kept descending through rich valleys of corn, the mountains gradually diminished, and about evening we entered the plain of Salerno, the last view of the rocks above Pæstum, covered with wood, was a farewell resemblance of

Calabrian scenery. I was rather amused in the course of my journey at the way in which the post was conveyed. At one little village, the courier left the bag wide open upon a wall for three-quarters of an hour, while he ate his breakfast : from Eboli to Salerno, a distance certainly not more than sixteen miles, we were four hours on the road, and we were again detained at the barriers of Naples nearly an hour while our passports were examined. At last, after travelling the whole night, we arrived at eight o'clock, July 8th, at the Gran Bretagna.

The road through Calabria is good, but more especially excellent from Morano to Eboli. The worst parts are between Cosenza and Tarsia, and these are only in the valleys. The accommodations of course depend on chance, but that chance is assisted by the greatest individual courteousness. Provisions are still more uncertain ; but we provided against emergencies, by boiling a great many hard eggs, and on these, in fact, we lived the whole way. The distance between Cosenza and Lago Negro I think about 82 miles :—the first day, to Esaro, 36 ; the second, to Castellucio, 28 ; the third, to Lago Negro, 18. I must add, however, Rotonda seems pre-

ferable to Castellucio for a halting-place, as there is an inn there of promising exterior.

Before I leave the subject of Calabria, I cannot help giving an anecdote of depravity related by Rivarol, that one could hardly believe to have happened in Europe. One of those wonderful ruffians*, who created so much sensation in Calabria the beginning of this century, was obliged to fly into his native fastnesses to avoid being taken: he was accompanied by his family; but fearing the cries of his infant child (of whom his wife had just been brought to bed) would betray him to his pursuers, he seized it by the heel, and dashed out the brains of the innocent against a tree. The wife watched till the bandit was asleep, stilettoed him, cut off his head, and, carrying it to the next town, claimed the reward offered by the police†.

* His name was Bizarro, a bravo of the forests of Solano.

† Swinburne has described the forests we passed from Paola to Cosenza as the haunt in his time of banditti. The valleys on leaving Cosenza, the ruined houses of Tarsia, the situation of Morano, are correctly but slightly delineated by this author; and with much interest did I travel over again with him that eventful ground.

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